The Antiquities of Hastings.

Geo. Biddell.
Oct. 1934

THE ANTIQUITIES

OF

HASTINGS

AND

THE BATTLEFIELD,

WITH MAPS,

AND A PLAN OF THE BATTLE.

BY

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1884.

HASTINGS :

PRINTED BY F. J. PARSONS, "OBSERVER" OFFICE,

CLAREMONT.

TO

Alfred Lewis Ward, Esq.,

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED,

AS A SLIGHT TOKEN

OF THE ESTEEM AND REGARD

OF HIS SINCERE AND ATTACHED FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

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THE BATTLEFIELD.

EXTRACTS FROM PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THIS little Work owes its origin to a request made to the writer, on the occasion of the British Archæological Association holding their Congress at Hastings, that he would draw up some account of the Antiquities of the Town. As the writer grew interested in his subject, the unconnected descriptions of some of our antiquities became gradually woven into a continuous account of our ancient Port. The Paper was read before the Philosophical Society, and the Members and many other friends having expressed a wish that it should be printed, together with a Paper on the Octo-Centenary of the Battle of Hastings, this Volume is the result.

In Part I., "On Hastings," the possibility of a Roman Origin is considered; an attempt has been made to fix the site of the Saxon Town, and the passage in Domesday relating to Hastings has been investigated with especial reference to the New Burg therein mentioned; also some *data* have been given for determining the grant of the Arms of the Cinque Ports.

The following are the principal Authorities that have been consulted :—Domesday Book; Camden; Grose; Horsfield's Sussex; Moss's Town and Antiquities of Hastings; and Miss Howard's Handbook for Hastings, a very able description of Hastings and the Eastern part of Sussex.

In Part II., "On the Battle," of the more ancient Authorities, the Roman de Rou and the Bayeux Tapestry have been the most adhered to; and Lingard, Palgrave, Lower, Creasy, and Thierry among the moderns.

In the course of a careful examination of the Battlefield, the writer was fortunate enough to discover a ravine which corresponds so exactly with the Mal Fosse of the Roman de Rou that it seems to him to settle the *vexata quæstio* of its position.

1, LINTON TERRACE,
HASTINGS,

June, 1867.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

Of the original work, the first part has been almost wholly recast, and a considerable quantity of new matter incorporated. Amongst the additions are particulary relating to Roman Hastings, the Bayeux Tapestry, the College of St. Mary, the Priory of the Holy Trinity, the Magdalene Hospital, the Custumal, and the Precedence of our Town.

The Second Part has been but slightly modified.

It has not been thought necessary to encumber the book with references, but it would be indeed ungrateful not to acknowledge my continual indebtedness to the stores of antiquarian lore treasured up in the Sussex Archæological Collection : and this brings the saddening reflection, how many valued contributors have passed away quite recently as it were ; amongst whose honoured names should be recorded those of Cooper, Lower, Ross and Turner ; also my lamented friend the Rev. Thomas Vores, to whom the First Edition was dedicated.

The Maps and Index will, it is hoped, enhance the usefulness of the present edition. In preparing the Map of 1646, and the Plan of the Battle, I was

fortunate in having the skilled and friendly aid of Mr. Sullivan, Head Master of our School of Art; and Mr. F. C. Gant kindly lent his valuable help in the Map of 1291.

To the President, Dr. Bagshawe, and the Council of the Philosophical Society, my gratitude is in an especial manner due, for having undertaken the onerous responsibility of re-publishing this work; and I have in particular to express my very deep obligations to the Honorary Secretary, Mr. Ward, from whom came the suggestion of the reprint, and to whose untiring exertions any success which may attend the present issue will be mainly owing.

I beg also to thank most cordially the numerous friends who have subscribed.

T. H. COLE.

59, CAMBRIDGE ROAD,
HASTINGS,
November, 1884.

The Antiquities of Hastings.

CHAPTER I.

Physical Causes which have exerted an influence on the History of Hastings.

The line of coast from Beachy Head to Shorncliffe consists of Marsh lands, except in the immediate neighbourhood of Hastings, where the Forest Ridge terminates in bold cliffs extending for about five or six miles. A glance at the Ordnance Map will show that this ridge, along which the high road keeps, as it did of old, must, in Cæsar's times, and for many succeeding centuries, have been the only pass into the interior; it was then bounded on either side by forests and morasses; it stretches through Battle and Heathfield to Hadley Down, where the hills, forming the watershed of the Rother and the Ouse, by a large arc, connect it with Crowborough Beacon, the highest point in the County, and with Ashdown Forest, a remnant of the Forest of Anderida, which in the time of the Venerable Bede was 120 miles in length by 30 broad, and effectually separated this part of the coast from the inland districts.

Two Valleys, situated at the extremity of this Ridge, have been held for more than a thousand years by the mariners of Hastings.

Of these the most easterly is less than two miles long, and so narrow that the Bourne, by which it is watered, and by which we shall sometimes find it convenient to distinguish it, must have always been an insignificant stream, and Mr. Knocker relies on this circumstance as his chief argument against Hastings having been the principal of the Cinque Ports. He says: "I have not found any record of its having ever possessed a port or harbour, except what Mr. Jeake, who wrote his treatise on the ports in 1678, says: 'That the present town of Hastings is built between two hills, between which runs a fresh water called the Bourne.' The inhabitants appear to have an impression that a port existed in former time, and, I believe, point out the course in which ran a small river, which may be probably the Bourne referred to by Jeake."* But Mr. Knocker entirely overlooks the force of the term "present town," which decidedly implies not only that there was an older town, but also that it was not on exactly the same spot; and while he gives quotations from Moss† on p. 5 and p. 8, he omits the following important passage on p. 7:—"Little is now known of *Hastings* as to its earliest origin, and as little nearly of the old Saxon town which existed

* Court of Shepway, p. 22.

† Moss's History of Hastings.

subsequently: the *latter* having been for ages buried in the deep with scarcely a remaining trace or vestige of its existence. Jeake, in speaking of the first enfranchisement of Hastings, says:* '[*Ports* implies them all sea-towns, in whose havens and harbours ships may safely arrive and unlade; and no doubt at first thus they were, though now the restless sea hath shut itself off from some of them, and as at Hasting, covered with its ways the old town and port, as some say three miles, and left this town and port of Hasting only a stade place, but] whether this or the OLD TOWN OF HASTINGS be that which was first enfranchised and incorporated with the other ports, I leave as yet uncertain:' and the Rev. Mr. Clarke, in his extracts from and observations on, the Charters of the Cinque Ports, states the old town of Hastings to have been a great deal to the south of the present town; from the encroachments of the sea on the Sussex coast, it doubtless shared the same fate with other neighbouring towns on the coast, by being swallowed up and buried in the sea."

The Priory Valley, as we term that to the west of the Castle, has a much larger basin than the other. Of fan-like shape, it receives the drainage of several thousand acres, and its surrounding hills, when crowned with the trees of the primeval forest, were sources of

*Moss himself has omitted to quote the words enclosed in brackets, which occur in Jeake's Charters of the Cinque Ports, p. 6. n. 9. Jeake's book though written in 1678, was not published till 1737.

streams ample enough to form a capacious haven for the light barques of Briton and of Saxon; and it is actually shewn as a considerable inlet in Speed's Map of Sussex, 1608. Indeed it is easy to trace the harbour now. From Carlisle Parade to the Engine House in Alexandra Park is a tract somewhat under high water mark, averaging 400 or 500 feet in width, excepting near the sea, where it is wider, winding up the country for a mile and a half between the hills on either side. The perfect level of its surface is obviously due to the ebb and flow of the sea, and at high water, almost within living memory, the tide flowed in between the Castle and Cuckoo Hill, flooding the districts of Holy Trinity and St. Andrew's up to Hole Farm to such an extent that to get from the Old Town to St. Leonards, people had to ascend the West Hill from Hill Street, and go along St. Mary's Terrace to Mount Pleasant, thence by Laton Road to Hole Farm, from thence to the Magdalen Hospital, where the De Cham Road is now, down to Warrior Gate, in our own days known as Warrior Square.

In the Corporation Map of 1742, the haven is shewn in the Priory valley with vessels in it, and the sea has not quite done with it yet, for several times, in my own recollection, the whole valley has been under water. One flood, which occurred on September 22nd, 1866, was thus described in a local paper: "A flood at the Priory is by no means a novelty, for it is an occurrence which even the oldest inhabitant may associate with the remembrance

of early days. Of late years the inundations, which at one time were regarded as periodical events, have diminished both in number and extent, and therefore it is not a matter of great surprise that the flood, which came with unusual magnitude on Saturday morning last, found the denizens of the neighbourhood unprepared. Most of our readers are aware that the unpleasant inundations are caused by the large body of water which descends from the surrounding hills after a long continuance of rain, and flowing down the valley, finds a resting place in the Cricket Ground. The gathering of water in the Cricket Ground at an early hour was the first sign of the coming flood, and in a comparatively short time the entire surface of the ground was covered, until the water was several feet in depth. Pleasure skiffs were skimming about over the surface, and during the morning a rowing match might be seen at the spot where, on the previous day, a cricket match was played."*

It is in this Priory Valley, and in its prolongation out to sea, that we must seek for the original site of the ancient town and port of Hastings, and not in the Bourne Valley, according to the generally received opinion. True, no traces of this ancient town are now discoverable; but this would apply equally to Old Winchelsea, which was overwhelmed by the sea in

*_Hastings Chronicle_, September 26th, 1866.

1286, though it had been strong enough to stand a siege against King Edward only 20 years before; and yet now we cannot point out even where it stood. If 600 years have sufficed to destroy all vestiges of Old Winchelsea, what wonder that in 800 years all tokens of the Old Burg of Hastings have been effaced! How have such changes come about? A very slight acquaintance with the rudimentary principles of geology supplies us with the answer. Our cliffs, under the restless action of the waves, are receding yearly before our eyes, and ever have been so receding. Our hills and the intermediate valleys once stretched far out to seaward. The long parallel reefs to which we give the name of the Castle Rocks, and similar ledges along the shore, formed the bases of cliffs—it may be within the historic period. This is no mere conjecture, for the remains of trees and hedges even now continually met with when the tide is out, prove that the sea-shore was once at least half a mile further to the south. Again, the burial place and remains of the tower discovered by Mr. Ross are at the extremity of the East Hill; but to suppose that the bones of the dead were deposited at the very edge of the cliff, would be to suppose that they were deposited where the very object of burial would be defeated. The East Hill, therefore, must have extended not only further to the south, but also further to the west; and the Bourne Valley may, at a remote period, have converged toward the other, which would account for the direction which the Bourne formerly took—first of

all, flowing midway between High Street and All Saints' Street, along Bourne Street (to which it gave the name), and then, turning to the west, along what are now called John Street and George Street.

The Martello Towers, which were strongly built as recently as the year 1805, and were all standing, with only one exception, in 1841, have been successively undermined by the sea, and now we have to go for miles along the coast westward before coming to a tower that is still able to bid defiance to the waves. In the first edition of this work, published in 1867, occurred these words, "Quite recently the road to Pevensey has twice been destroyed, and had to be diverted further inland."* Since those words were written, the road has actually had to be diverted a third and a fourth time. The annual loss of land on this part of the coast has, in fact, been estimated at seven feet a year,† which would be equivalent to a furlong in a century, and a mile in 800 years. A precisely similar loss of land is taking place on the opposite side of the Channel, within 40 miles of us. On the heights of Boulogne, the Roman Emperor Caligula built, A.D. 40, a huge tower as a memorial of the invasion of Britain, which never was accomplished by him, "nearly a mile inland from the sea."‡ In 1544, being then only 200 yards from the edge of the cliff, the Tour d'Odre

* Antiquities of Hastings, p. 13. Original Edition.
† Redman, Proceedings Institut. Civil Engineers, iii.
‡ Merridew's Boulogne, p. 125.

was fortified by the English; in 1644, the sea undermined it to such an extent that it fell, so that, in that century the sea gained exactly six feet a year, nearly agreeing with the estimate above given for the waste of the English Coast, and showing a loss of a mile of ground since Roman days. The ruins now stand on the verge, and were but ten feet more of the cliff to fall, some future explorer might doubt that such a work had ever been erected. However, by far the most practical proof of the ravages of our sea is, that the farmers near the shore stipulate that their farms shall be periodically surveyed, in order that they may not pay rent for acres which no longer exist. One farm, in the parish of Bexhill of about 1000 acres, has lost 40 acres from this cause alone in half a century; in this case the valuation takes place every five years, and on one occasion 13 acres had disappeared in that short period. It is very certain, then, that our own cliffs, which we see falling away every year before our eyes, must in the course of centuries have suffered much from like causes, and that our valleys must have once extended much further out to sea, and that it would consequently be difficult to discover the traces of a town situated near the mouth of the Priory Valley in Roman or British times, the site of which would now be covered by the waters.

It has been urged that these valleys could never have harboured powerful fleets; but when the great wood of Anderida spread through Kent and our eastern part of Sussex, where the "hursts" and

"fields," the *woods* and adjoining *cleared spaces*, the Crowhursts and the Westfields still mark out its old area; when the Weald was what its name imports—a forest land—the foliage formed an impervious barrier to the escape of vapour to the air, the sunshine never visited the swampy glens, the valleys, now drained by some slender rivulet, were filled with water from side to side. As the centuries rolled on, the woodland has waned before the woodman's axe, and the land, cleared and drained, has sent less and less moisture to the sea.

Before these fields were shorn and tilled,
Full to the brim our rivers flowed;
The melody of waters filled
The fresh and boundless wood.
And torrents dashed and rivulets played,
And fountains spouted in the shade.
Those grateful sounds are heard no more,
The springs are silent in the sun,
The rivers by the blackened shore
With lessening current run. *Bryant.*

The cascades of Glen Roar and Old Roar, situated in one of the upland glens of the Priory Valley, though silent now, bear witness in their names to an era when the sound of those falls was heard afar, and when there was no want of water to float the tiny vessels of the Ports, whose average size may be gathered from the instructions for resisting the Spanish Armada: "Hastinges whose members be, and are to finde for the transportation of the King *xxi* shippes, of *xx* tonnes the peece."*

* Harleian MSS. 168, p. 115.

Above all, it should be noted that this Priory Valley was once very much deeper than it is now—quite deep enough to float ships of much heavier burthen than the above. It has gradually silted up through the enclosing of land and the deposit of matter; indeed, in every part of the valley where building operations have been attempted, this alluvial deposit has been found extending to a great depth, and all that part between Cambridge Road and the sea is one mass of beach. This gathering of beach is due to a cause peculiar to this coast, for, owing to the tidal wave passing from west to east, and the prevalence of south-westerly winds, loose soil and shingle are continually moving eastward; and being checked at each river-mouth, a considerable portion is deposited south-west of the entrance, and a bank of shingle is formed nearly across the river, which is forced to turn to the east, if not entirely choked up. This effect may be noticed at Lymne, Hythe, Romney, and Seaford.

One very good instance is that of the River Asten, which, coming from the high ground near Battle, after reaching the Sheepwash Bridge in the Salts, is forced by the banks of shingle to sweep round the cliffs towards Bopeep, where it now empties itself into the sea by an artificial channel. Within the writer's recollection it entered the sea still farther to the east.

But this peculiar effect is particularly observable in our own Priory Valley, where the Brook, which once

flowed straight out, was—probably in consequence of the overthrow of the embankment in 1325—gradually compelled by the beach to alter its course, till it wound round the base of the Castle Cliff. Its bed, though long filled up, is easily traceable as it followed the direction of the existing thoroughfares of York Buildings and Castle Street. This alteration has certainly been brought about since the beginning of the 14th century, for up to that date the sea washed the base of the Castle Cliff.

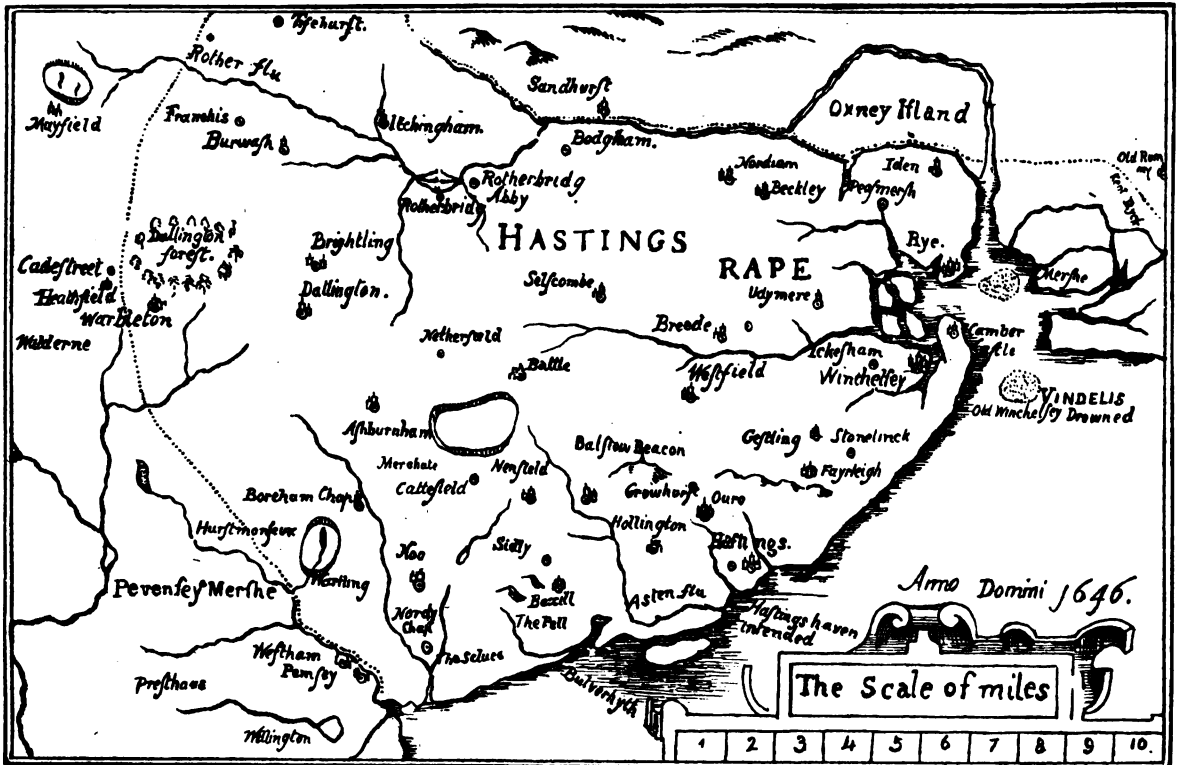
If, then, all the soil and beach that has accumulated in the Priory were removed, the valley would even now form a well-sheltered harbour, and at high tide would be quite an arm of the sea.

We are not, however, left entirely to surmises as to possible or probable alterations in our coast line. We have a map, dated 1646, carefully and correctly drawn, in which we have a startling proof of change in our shore—nothing less than the existence of *a large island off St. Leonards*, so late as the time of Oliver Cromwell—which has been so completely effaced that even all memory of it has gone. This map, "Described by John Norden, augmented by John Speede,"* appears to be very carefully drawn, going even so much into detail as to mark the exact position

* The map, slightly altered, but *with the island*, is reprinted in the Edition of Camden in George I's reign, where the Editor observes in the Preface that "the maps also have been revised by knowing and skilful persons in each county." This would almost seem to carry on the island to the time of George I.

of "Hastings haven intended"; with regard to which haven I shall have something to say further on.† The draughtsman, therefore, who delineated Sussex may be credited not only with a general but with a particular knowledge of Hastings and its surroundings: a sandbank marks where Old Winchelsea was drowned; our local rivers—the Bourne, the Priory Brook, and the Asten—are all depicted; the last turned then, as it does now, to the east on approaching the sea, but seems to have kept on its easterly course much longer, so that it did not disembogue till some point near the Undercliff, St. Leonards, not far, perhaps, from the bottom of London Road, where colliers still come to land. The island stretched along about the same extent of coast, and seems to have been a mile and a half in length and half a mile broad. The measurements are not to be judged by the accuracy of modern requirements: they had no ordnance surveys in those days, and therefore the distances are apt sometimes to be under, sometimes over the mark. Yet, even measured by the rigid test of an ordnance map, we find the villages in our immediate neighbourhood—certainly those near the sea—put down in their proper relative positions, and at proportionate distances from one another. In addition to the island, there are other interesting changes to be noted. The haven of Bulverhythe was then actually an inlet of the sea; now cows pasture

† Chap. 10.


HASTINGS RAPE
Oxney Iland
Rother flu
Sandhurst
Bodgham.
Rotherbridg Abby
Rotherbridg
Itchingham
Ticehurst.
Mayfield
Franchis
Burwash
Dallington forest.
Cadestreet
Heathfield
Warbleton
Walderne
Brightling
Dallington.
Selscombe
Nethersfeld
Battle
Breede
Udymere
Westfield
Ickesham
Winchelsey
Nordiam
Beckley
Iden
Peasmersh
Rye.
Mershe
Camber Castle
Old Rom
Kent Dyck
VINDELIS
Old Winchelsey Drowned
Ashburnham
Merchate
Cattesfield
Nenfield
Balstow Beacon
Gestling
Stonelinck
Fayrleigh
Growhurst
Ouro
Hollington
Hastings.
Boreham Chap
Hurstmonseux
Herstling
Pevensey Mershe
Hoo
Sidly
Bexhill
The Pell
Norden Chap
The Sclues
Asten flu
Hastings haven intended
Bulverhyth
Westham
Pemsey
Presthaus
Willington
Anno Domini 1646.
The Scale of miles
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10.

in its swampy bottom. Of the correctness of this we have incidental proof in a town-ordinance, passed in 1676 (about 30 years after the date of this map)—"That shallops and other outlandish vessels which put into Bulverhythe Haven shall pay 12d. for every vessel to the Pierwarden." A useless edict if there were no haven there. The Castle of Winchelsea was still on the verge of the sea, where Henry VIII. had built it a century before. It is now a mile inland from the shore; so that, while a mile or more of coast has been destroyed at St. Leonards, a mile has been added off Winchelsea. The new land may have been formed of the débris of the old, and the soil that once was St. Michael to seaward, may now be spread over Pett Level. If such singular changes have occurred in the course of 240 years, how great must have been the changes of our coast in the 800 years that have elapsed since the Norman Conquest! How much greater in the 1800 years that separate us from the Roman Conquest!

Having investigated at some length the considerations of a physical nature that appear to establish the existence of a harbour here in ancient times, we propose to sketch its history in the following chapters.

CHAPTER II.

British and Roman Times.

Our earliest information as to this part of Britain is confined to what we can gather from Cæsar. From him we learn that the south-eastern districts were inhabited by tribes much more refined than those of the interior; that they were of the same race as the Belgæ who dwelt between the Rhine and the Seine, in many cases bearing the same names — as, for instance, the Atrebates—and that there was a great intercourse between these kindred nations. Indeed, shortly before his time, a Belgian Chieftain ruled on both sides of the Channel, and Cæsar incidentally shews that the Britons of these parts must have been continually engaged in maritime expeditions, by informing us, as one of the reasons for the invasion of the island, that he had found in *all* his wars, they supplied reinforcements to his Gallic enemies. Even the Veneti, though situated on the southern shores of Brittany, were assisted in their naval contests by Britons from the coasts opposite the Menapii and Morini, *i.e.*, from Kent and Sussex. There are strong reasons for believing that these Belgæ were neither more nor less than our own Saxon ancestors—at all events, they were not Celts, for Cæsar says that they differed from the Celts in language, laws, and institutions. They themselves told Cæsar that they were of

Germanic extraction; and certain it is that the precise regions occupied by these Germanic Belgæ in Cæsar's time, both in Gaul and Britain, were known as *the Saxon Shore* more than two centuries before the alleged invasion of Hengist and Horsa. Grant that the Belgæ were identical with the Saxons, and it at once explains the entire absence of the Celtic element in the population of the south-east of Britain, and why modern Belgium is inhabited by a Low German race. It also explains the familiarity of the Britons with naval warfare, for the Low Germanic races have ever been at home upon the sea, while the Celtic tribes have universally shewn an aversion to it. The Veneti and their British allies used sailing vessels instead of galleys for their ships of war; and there is a special reason which renders it probable that some of the ships that fought Cæsar hailed from our own old port, for Cæsar tells us that the Britons used iron, and that the iron was found near the coast. Now, it is only in the cliffs and valleys adjoining Hastings that iron is to be met with, and on either side of this our Priory Valley the ancient ironworks can yet be pointed out. This harbour, then, in particular would be in great demand for transporting this metal to the other parts of Britain, and to Gaul. It would be of necessity a great emporium, where the cargoes of iron would be exchanged for the copper which Cæsar tells us was imported. The ships that frequented this haven must have formed no inconsiderable part of the British armament that went to

the aid of their allies in Gaul. These allies, when hard pressed, took refuge in towns placed at the extremities of the lofty cliffs* overlooking the harbours in which their ships found shelter. Just such a town once occupied the summit of the East Cliff,† defended on the east by the lofty embankment which constitutes our oldest antiquity, still in a good state of preservation, and on the north by an artificial escarpment of the hill, where its natural steepness was not deemed sufficient, and amply protected everywhere else by the precipitous character of the hill. Near the apex of the triangular space thus marked out is a burial place discovered by Mr. Ross. "The bodies lay on charcoal two inches in thickness, and by the right side of each what appeared to be iron rivets, having a head at each end about the size of a halfpenny, with the remains of wood attached. Each body had besides five or six large-headed nails, roughly made. Under each skull was an oyster-shell, in the hollow of which the skull rested. Three of them differed in the mode of sepulture, the head resting on a hollow boulder from the seashore."‡ The iron rivets are characteristic of this iron region, and indicate that it was a Belgic place of sepulture. The Celts, however, whom the Belgæ dispossessed, have left at least one proof

* "Erant ejusmodi fere situs oppidorum ut posita in extremis promontoriis."—Cæsar iii, 12.

† Where several British remains have been found. Suss. Arch. ix, 366; xiii, 308.

‡ Paper read before the British Arch. Assoc^{n} Aug. 20, 1866.

behind that they too once held their habitation here in the Minnis Rocks,* for *menys* is the Celtic or Welsh for a steep ascent; and this term is extremely appropriate to their position.

On the neighbouring Castle Hill was a similar town or camp, also triangular in shape, but much smaller, defended towards its base by the high embankment still discernible on the northern and eastern faces of the "Lady's Parlour," and by the natural steepness of the remaining sides. This corresponds with what Cæsar tells us of the tactics of the seafaring people to whom he was opposed—that when forced out of one of their towns, they would pass over in their shipping to another in the immediate vicinity, and that then the siege operations had to be commenced afresh.

But it was not on these heights—exposed to the full force of the south-western gales, and from which they could have had no easy access to their boats—that they were likely to have fixed their permanent abodes. The site of the town in which, in more peaceful times, they passed their lives, was to the west of the Priory Valley, where they would be sheltered from the storms of the channel, and where the fleets in which these hardy sailors crossed the

* A unique specimen of an ancient hermitage. From these Rocks, which look down on the Old London Road, there is an exceedingly pretty view of Hastings; and it is a great pity that the rubbish with which their recesses are filled is not cleared out, and that they are not made an object of attraction to visitors.

sea and even navigated the Bay of Biscay, could be moored in perfect safety; and this lower town must also have had *defences* raised as much against the sea as against a human enemy, of the existence of which in some parts of our coast we have contemporary evidence, for Cicero, whose brother accompanied Cæsar to the island, and who was in correspondence with Cæsar himself at the time, uses the following remarkable expression in a letter to Atticus, written while Cæsar and his brother were in Britain, which has hardly attracted the attention it deserves:—"Britannici belli exitus expectatur. Constat enim aditus insulæ esse munitos mirificis molibus."*—"The issue of the British war is awaited with anxiety. For it is certain that the entrances to the island are defended by wonderful works." Here we have a hint that the Britons did not only trust to their impregnable cliffs, but had their river-mouths (the only meaning to be assigned to "aditus") strongly guarded by huge moles or dams, offering alike an obstruction to the sea and to their dangerous Roman foe. Indeed, we gather from Cicero's letter that Cæsar encountered a more determined resistance than he had calculated on (especially as the Britons had lost the first line of their defences by the destruction of their fleets in the disastrous naval campaign of the previous year), and that the results of the expedition were not so satisfactory as had generally been expected.

* Cic. Ep. ad. Atticum. Lib. iv, Ep. 16.

It is quite possible that ours was one of the places alluded to by Cicero as defended by artificial embankments. We know Volusenus was sent for the express purpose of ascertaining what harbours were capable of admitting a large fleet of good-sized ships. He was unable to land, and therefore must have spent his time solely in coasting. He returned to Cæsar on the fifth day. He was in a ship of war, furnished after the Roman fashion, with banks of oars. He would, therefore, to some extent, be independent of the wind and tide, and the vessel could be propelled with great speed. He would thus have ample time to reconnoitre every harbour from the North Foreland to Beachy Head; and if our port was then a suitable one, Cæsar would direct his course this way. According to Professor Airy, late Astronomer Royal, it was on our Hastings hills that the Triumvir saw the native forces in armed array. Be that as it may, Cæsar describes the place he reached as a narrow inlet of the sea, shut in by heights, from which weapons could be discharged upon the shore beneath, a description which would tally well with our old haven. Thinking it unsuitable for landing, he passed on to an open and level shore, about seven miles from this place. The country beyond Bexhill, seven miles from Hastings, singularly answers to this description. However, the whole question of where Cæsar landed is one which is so uncertain, and has been so long and warmly debated, that I should not have ventured to touch on it, only I could not resist the temptation of pointing

out the bare possibility that he and his legions may actually have encamped in this neighbourhood; but if he did not, later Roman generals did. The Romans, on their conquest of the island, could not neglect a position so strong by Nature, and so conveniently situated for communication with their province of Gaul, and commanding *a view of the sea*, which Gildas, speaking of the close of the Roman occupation, says was an essential feature in every Roman fort on the South Coast. The East Hill is known traditionally as the Camp Hill, from the Roman Camp on its summit. It was here a Roman gold coin of Theodosius was picked up. The great Eastern embankment still stands almost untouched; the western limit of the camp is clearly marked by a great fall in the ground all across the hill, parallel to and about 1,100 feet from the first embankment, while the Northern side of the camp is well defined by an artificial escarpment of the hillside; the sea cliffs form the defence on the South. As the breadth of the plateau averages also about 1,100 feet, we have here a square area 1,100 feet each way, and it should be borne in mind that a Roman camp was almost invariably an exact square. From Polybius we learn that four legions would occupy a space nearly four times as large as this. Hence the size of our camp corresponds with great precision to the area which would be requisite for a single legion, and it was rare for more than one legion to be stationed in a permanent post.

That our town was supposed to have been fortified even before the Roman Conquest is clear, from the celebrated passage in the Chronicles of the Dover Monastery: "When Arviragus threw off the Roman yoke, it is likely he fortified those places which were most convenient for their invasion, viz., Richborough, Walmer, Dover, and Hastings." † This Arviragus was a son of the Cymbeline, immortalised by Shakespeare. According to some, Cymbeline had served in the Roman armies, and when King he continued the tribute, which his uncle Cassivellaunus had been compelled to pay. Strabo, a contemporary of Cymbeline, so far confirms this that he states that the British Princes offered gifts in the Capitol to Augustus. Others say that Cymbeline refused to be a tributary, but there is no doubt that Arviragus, who began his reign in the 12th year of the Christian Era, claimed to be independent of Rome. Here we find the Dover Monks writing at a time when the incorporation of Hastings with the other Cinque Ports was still comparatively recent, recognising her as a British town contemporary with Augustus, and coupling her with Richborough and Dover, of whose existence as Roman places of strength there has never been any doubt.

More than three centuries after the departure of the Romans, we first meet with a notice of the town under its present appellation of Hastings; occasionally it bears the significant addition of Chester, and it is in

† Leland, De rebus Britannicis. Collectanea ii, 50.

fact so called in the Bayeux Tapestry. Now this term invariably indicates that the town so distinguished is of Roman origin; and the Romans, when fully established in the island, would not be content with holding the camp above, but would strengthen the defences of the bay below, where the inhabitants and ships most required protection. That the British town became in course of time a Roman one with municipal rights, is further evidenced by the term Baron or Combaron, which has from time immemorial been used to distinguish our representatives (whether in the Commons House of Parliament or when assembled in Brotherhood and Guestling with the other Ports), and, generally, the freemen of the Cinque Ports; and which we are told, on the great legal authority of Coke, indubitably points to a Roman origin of the corporate body in which it is used.

Again, Kent was well defended by Rutupiæ or Richborough Castle, near Sandwich, and by Dover; Romney Marsh, by Lymne; the neighbourhood of the Downs, by Anderida or Pevensey; but unless it be allowed that there was a Roman post here, we are driven to the strange conclusion that they omitted all means of securing the whole line of coast from Hythe to Pevensey from insult and invasion, at the very point were a good harbour and facilities for advancing into the interior of the country were sure to invite the approach of an enterprising foe; and Gildas, writing about 560, expressly states that at the time of the

Romans quitting the island, they placed towers at intervals in sight of the sea along the shore of the South Coast,* wherever their ships were kept. These various considerations produce on my own mind, by their cumulative effect, the conviction that this was a Roman municipal town; indeed, if the town were *now* known by its earlier designation of Hastingchester, I am sure that name alone would be accepted as a convincing proof of the truth of my proposition.

Can we then identify it with any of the known Roman stations? I think we can. I think we may assume with tolerable certainty that it was the Portus Novus of Ptolemy. Claudius Ptolemæus, one of the most famous geographers and astronomers of ancient times, published a geographical guide between the years 139 and 161 of the Christian Era. This guide, which fortunately has come down to us, contains a list of all the places then known in the Continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa. In the list of places on the south coast of Britain occurs the Portus Novus, one degree west of the Promontory of Kent, which may be identified either with the North or South Foreland (it makes little difference which, as their longitude is almost the same); and Mr. Bradley observes, after making due allowance for the difference between Ptolemy's degrees of longitude and our own, "this indicates the precise longitude of Hastings. Now

* Mon. Hist. Brit., p. 11.

it is well known that Hastings did once possess an excellent harbour. The fact that this has now disappeared seems to shew that it was an artificial harbour, constructed in defiance of the natural unfitness of the site; exactly in fact what the term Portus Novus (New Port) would naturally be supposed to imply."* Such artificial works we know were raised by the Romans near Romney. If similar works were carried out by them off our own part of the coast, it may be that they were destroyed in 1325; for in that year it is recorded that embankments near Hastings burst; and that these were part of the defences of Hastings is shewn to be probable, because, in 1339, just 14 years after, we hear for the first time of Hastings being attacked, and some of the houses being burnt, and some of the people slain.

Although I believe Mr. Bradley's arguments to be sound, and his conclusions correct, yet they depend on a hypothesis which may not meet with universal acceptance; for instance, it is challenged by Mr. Gordon M. Hill, in the same journal.† I am happy, therefore, to believe we can point out the situation of the Portus Novus very accurately, free from all complications as to what may or may not be the length of Ptolemy's degrees; for that Author gives 20° as

* On Ptolemy's measurements of the South Coast, by Henry Bradley. Journal of the British Archæological Association, Vol. 37, part 3, p. 227.

† On Mr. Bradley's Ptolemaic measurements of the South Coast. Journ. Brit. Arch. A., Vol. 37, part 3, p. 277.

the longitude of Londinium, 21° of Portus Novus, and 22° of Promontorium Cantium;* and assuming the latter as both Mr. Gordon Hill and Mr. Bradley have done, to be the South Foreland, we see that (no matter what the length of the degree was) Portus Novus was exactly midway, as far as longitude is concerned, between London and the Foreland. Now, as London is a large place, it is fortunate that we know the limits of the Roman Londinium, and that we have the very spot from which the Roman miles were measured, marked out to us by the famous London Stone in Cannon Street.

This Stone is at least 5′ west of Greenwich; the South Foreland and Hastings are respectively 83′ and 35′ east of Greenwich; and adding the extra 5′ on to each, we find the Foreland 88′, and Hastings 40′ east of the Stone; and as Portus Novus is half the distance between the Foreland and the Stone, this makes the Portus 44′ east from this same Stone; or a difference in position between Hastings and the Portus of only 4′, or little more than 2 miles; and as Ptolemy recognises no quantity smaller than 5′, this amounts to absolute identity. A similar result may be arrived by drawing—in Mr. Gordon Hill's Map of the Southern Counties of England†—two vertical lines through London and the South Foreland, and a third half-way between them, which last will be found to intersect the coast exactly at Hastings.

* Mon. Hist. Brit., xiii. xiv.
† Journ. Brit. Arch. A., vol. xxxiv, part 3, p. 320.

Our argument, then, stands thus :—1st, Actual examination of the locality shews the former existence of a harbour here, a fact in agreement with both Tradition and History. 2nd, The Encampment and Vestiges of Ironworks prove the harbour to have been known to the Romans. 3rd, A Roman Harbour called Portus Novus was situated at this very part of the coast. These three considerations put together seem to lead inevitably to the conclusion that Hastings was a Roman Port, and that Portus Novus was the name of Roman Hastings.*

* It would be very desirable that the foundation of the round tower discovered by Mr. Ross at the extremity of the East Hill should be examined, for the situation is so exactly adapted to the position the Romans usually chose for a Pharos or Lighthouse, that I should not be surprised to find there evidences of Roman workmanship.

CHAPTER III.

SAXON HASTINGS.

WE enter upon a new era with the departure of the Romans in 411. The Saxons, whether they had long been settled in the south-eastern part of our island, or were only then beginning to invade it, certainly commenced soon after this period to push their way into the other parts of Britain. The Roman towns, deprived of their Roman garrisons, fell one by one under the Saxon sway. One of their chieftains, Ælla, established the kingdom of the South Saxons or Sussex. In 491 he stormed Anderida, whose Roman walls, still for the most part standing, are visible at Pevensey.

"The Hastings, the noblest race of the Goths,"* seem to have held the eastern part of Sussex (known since the Conquest under the name of the Rape of Hastings) as an independent community; PORTUS NOVUS falling into their hands, after its abandonment by the Romans, naturally became their capital, and thus acquired the name of Hastings, by which it has ever since been known. Endless

* Taylor—Words and Places, p. 85.

instances might be cited of towns losing their ancient appellation, and becoming known by that of the tribe by whom they were surrounded. Two examples will suffice. Samarobriva, Cæsar's headquarters in the country of the Ambians, is now known as Amiens; and Lutetia, in the country of the Parisians, is now only known as Paris.

The Hastings were one of the many Saxon clans of which Sussex had more than sixty, a larger proportion than any other county, easily to be recognised by the termination of the patronymic *ing*. They were scions of renowned families across the seas, whose names they bore. The Viking Hasting (who used to be thought the founder of Hastings, until it was discovered that the town was known by this name at least a century before he flourished) was doubtless a member of a continental clan, part of which had established itself and introduced its name here some hundred years before his era.

Mr. Kemble thinks that where the patronymic stands without any suffix, as in the case of Basing and Hastings, we have the original settlement of the clan, and the names to which suffixes are supplied are offshoots; thus Basingstoke would be a colony of Basing, and Hastingleigh in Kent, and Hastingford, near Crowborough, in Sussex, would be offshoots from the parent Hastings. This enterprising clan planted one settlement within a few miles of Bayonne. The name occurs in a dispatch of the Duke of Wellington, dated 1st March, 1814—"Marshall Sir W. Beresford

attacked the enemy on the 23rd, in their fortified posts at Hastingues." *

The passage in which the name of the Hastings is first mentioned occurs in Simeon of Durham's Chronicle—"A.D. 771. *His diebus Offa rex Merciorum, Hestingorum gentem armis subegerat.*" †—"In these days, Offa, King of the Mercians, had subdued by force of arms the race of the Hastings." Simeon goes on to say that it was the year in which Charlemagne began to reign, which would make the date 768, or three years earlier. In connexion with this invasion, it may be remarked that coins of Offa have been found in Sussex; and Offa must have conquered the whole district round about—at least, as far as Pevensey and Rotherfield—for there is in existence a charter of King Offa, A.D. 791, by which he confirms the gift of Rotherfield and of the havens of Pevensey and Hastings, which had been bestowed on the Abbey of St. Denis, near Paris, by Berthwald, his faithful Lieutenant. Mr. Kerslake has pointed out a curious local connexion between Offa and Hastings. Helen, the British wife of the Roman Emperor Constantius, gave birth at York to Constantine the Great. She was a Christian, and is reputed to have discovered the true Cross at

* The name must have presented a familiar appearance to the Iron Duke, who had spent some time at Hastings in command of a Division, and who brought home his bride to Hastings House, adjoining All Saints' churchyard.

† Mon. Hist. Brit., p. 664.

Jerusalem; and being afterwards canonised, became the Holy Patroness of Southumbria, corresponding nearly to York, Lincoln, and Nottingham, where 62 churches are found consecrated to her. As the Southumbrians pressed into the centre of Britain, they carried their Saint with them; and 26 St. Helens are to be met with in Mercia. It would seem as if Offa adopted the banner of St. Helen as his own, for wherever he directed his conquests, that name is found in his footsteps, and we have a singular and unsuspected corroboration of Offa, King of Mercia, having once established himself amongst these hills; for here, far away from York and the Midlands, we have his favourite saint: the village church of Ore, (now in ruins) on the ridge two miles north of Hastings, and looking down upon the Priory Valley, having been dedicated to St. Helen.

The district over which the Hestingi held sway is shewn in the curious old map of 1646. It is called the Rape of Hastings, and consists principally of ranges of sandstone, separated on the east from the Kentishmen by the Rother and Romney Marsh; guarded on the north by the great Forest of Anderida; while on the west Pevensey Marsh served as a defence from the men of the South Downs.

The presenting of Hastings as a fief to the Abbey of St. Denis indicates as intimate a friendship between the kindred nations of Franks and Saxons as had previously existed between the Belgic tribes on the opposite sides of the channel; indeed, it is not at all

improbable that the banks of the Seine were more familiar to our sailors in the days of Charlemagne than now. The Saxon town of Hastings became so important in 924 that King Athelstan established a Mint here, a circumstance which goes far to prove that there was also a Castle, for it was the invariable custom to place a Mint within the precincts of a fortress, most likely because, in those days of violence, its treasures would have been an irresistible attraction to the lawless, if undefended. Amongst many instances may be mentioned Bristol, Ghent, and the old Mint in the Tower of London.

Ruding, in his work on coinage, speaks of pieces coined at Hastings in the reign of Canute, Edward the Confessor, Harold, William I, William II, and Henry I; and silver pennies struck at Hastings—one a very rare coin of Hardicanute—were discovered at Alfriston in 1843, and large silver coins of Edward the Confessor, of the same Mint, at Sedlescomb, in 1876. Mr. Ade gives a list of coins struck at the Sussex mints, from which I extract those coined at Hastings in Saxon times, as well as some additional varieties given by Mr. Lucas, in a later volume.

*CNVT RELX.	ÆLFPERD ON HÆS.
HARDACNVT RE.	BRIDD ON HAES.
EDPERD REX.	BRIDD ON HAESTIN.
EDPERD REX.	BRIDD ON HAESTING.
EDPERD REI.	BRID ON HAESTING.
EDPRD REX.	DVNNING ON HAESTIE.

* Suss. Arch., i, 38. The P in these inscriptions has the force of W.

*EADPARD REX.	PVLERIC ON HESTI.
	DVNNING ON HEST.
	DVNNING ON HÆ.
	BRID ON HESTINPO.
	BRID ON HESTINPOR.
	LEOFPINE ON HAES.
	LEOFPINE ON HAESTG.
	LEOFPINE ON HÆSTIGC.
	LIFPINE ON HAST.
	BRID ON HÆSTNG.
	BRID ON HÆ ſ TIEN.
	DVINNG OF HÆSTIN.
	DVINNG ON HÆ ſ TIE.
	BRID: ON HÆ ſ TI.
	DVNNING ON HÆ ſ.
	DVNING ON Æ ſ TIN.
	DVNING ON HÆ ſ T.
	PVLFRIC ON HÆ ſ TI.
	BRID ON HÆ ſ TIEN.
	BRID ON HÆ: SDIN.
	DVNNINE ONN HÆS.

From these it appears that Aelfwerd was Master of our Mint in the time of Cnut the Great, that Bridd or Brid had the office under Hardicnut and his brother Edward the Confessor, and that he was succeeded by Dunning, Wulfric, and Leofwine. It is interesting to note that the descendants of Brid are still living amongst us, and are likely to hand down his name to

* Suss. Arch., xx, 216.

future generations. The name of Breeds, so familiar to us, is, in fact, a patronymic, and means the son of Breed, or of Brid as it was spelt in those old times. We may also note the endless abridgements of HÆSTINGAS that appear on the coins; and that the Moneyers were sometimes careless about their h's. This variety is perhaps not to be wondered at when we see the liberties they took with their own names. They were sometimes transferred from one Mint to another; for instance, the name of Brid is found on coins of the Confessor struck at Dover. Aelfwerd occurs as Moneyer, at Bristol, in the reigns of Ethelred II. and of Harold, son of Cnut; and as he was at Hastings under Cnut, he would seem to have been transferred from Bristol to Hastings, and then back again. The term Hesting Port, which appears slightly abridged in the coins of Brid, affords valuable and contemporary testimony to the existence of the harbour when the Confessor was king.

The patron Saint of Hastings was, and still is, St. Michael; his figure is delineated on the Corporation Seal, and may be seen either in "Moss's History of Hastings," p. 131, or as drawn by Lower, Suss. Arch. i, 16. The motto of the town is "Draco crudelis. Te vincet Vis Micaelis"—"Cruel Serpent. Thee the force of Michael shall overcome."

The Saints, whose names appear on the Seal of the Cinque Ports, are generally those to whom the principal churches of the respective places are dedicated.

To this Saint, *i.e.*, St. Michael, I would draw

particular attention. A temple to Apollo was commonly to be observed in the centre of a Roman town; and when Rome adopted Christianity, the temple was replaced by a basilica dedicated to the Saint most nearly corresponding to that god. This was Saint Michael; for as Phœbus Apollo triumphed over the serpent Python, so the Archangel Michael triumphed over the serpent Satan. The worship of the Roman Apollo sometimes superseded an older worship still: for the Druids bowed before the sacred fires of their Sun-God, Bel; and the Romans, according to their wont, claimed the Fire-God of the Britons as their own. Thus the two St. Michael's Mounts of Cornwall and Brittany were traditionally dedicated to the Druids' God. In Roman Verulam, and in Roman Bath, the ancient temples are replaced in each case by a St. Michael's; the St. Michael's of Bath in particular being on the site of a very famous temple of Apollo. The tops of the Puys or Volcanic Mountains of Auvergne are everywhere surmounted by churches dedicated to St. Michael, no doubt in succession to the Fire-God of the Gauls. Westminster Abbey was once a Temple of Apollo. The central and most important part of Roman London is marked by the junction of the four thoroughfares—Leadenhall Street, Cornhill, Gracechurch Street, and Bishopsgate Street—and within a stone's throw of where these cross roads meet stands a St. Michael's.

In a parish, then, dedicated to this Saint I should look for the site of the old Saxon town. Such a parish still

exists, but of exceedingly limited dimensions; it occupies a very small strip of ground along the brow and at the foot of Cuckoo* Hill, about 170 yards long, with an average breadth of 60 yards, and may slightly exceed two acres in extent. The ruins of St. Michael's Church were still standing in 1834. The position of the old church on the top of Cuckoo Hill was central and commanding; and exactly corresponded to the St. Michael's of Newhaven, in overlooking the harbour's mouth. Although Old Hastings had many churches and many Saints, it was this Saint alone that was emblazoned on the banner. Is it likely that the Portsmen of old would have adopted as their patron that Saint who presided over the least of all their parishes? May we not rather assume that when the choice was made, St. Michael's was the leading parish of the place? If so, can we account for its great and wonderful diminution? It happens that we can with confidence assign two independent causes, each in their different way largely contributing to this decrease. One of these is the alienation of no less than 192 acres of the parish of St. Michael for the purpose of forming the demesne of the Priory of the Holy Trinity.† The other is the continuous action of

* "Cuck" signifies in Saxon, Chief, *e.g.*, Cuckmere, Cuckfield; and "hoo" a street or place; hence Cuckoo might have once been the High Street or Upper Town. Unfortunately for this derivation, it is so much more simple to suppose the hill to have got its name from the bird.

† An account of which will be found in Chapter viii.

the sea, by which, in the course of centuries, a very large number of acres of the parish have been submerged—a subject which has been already discussed in the first chapter, and to which we now return.

The small portion of St. Michael's Parish yet remaining borders on the sea; and if we follow out to seaward the direction of the present boundaries, we find that they embrace a tract of sea, sand, and rocks, where the oaks that are occasionally disinterred (one fine specimen can be inspected in Alexandra Park), and the hazel-nuts continually gathered among the rocks when the tides are at their lowest, recall from oblivion the ancient forest. This forest must have been brought to this state either by a general sinking of this part of the coast, which sinking would amply account for the ruin of the town and the waste of this particular district; or else, although the forest grew on such low ground as to be under the sea level, yet the sea must have been kept off, either by a natural rise in the ground on the south, *i.e.*, on the seaside of this forest, or otherwise by artificial embankments. Whichever hypothesis we adopt, it enables us to contemplate an indefinite expansion of the existing St. Michael's Parish beyond the present sea-board, and even gives room for the missing Parish of St. Peter. If we give credit to the idea of some antique sea defences—and we are almost forced to do so—if we put aside the theory of the sinking of the coast, may we not identify them with the embankments near Hastings, whose ruin is especially recorded in the reign of Edward II? And

may not these have been the actual artificial defences which went to constitute the "New Port," the Portus Novus of the Romans? That they did employ themselves on such works is shewn by the Roman remains at Lymne, and by the Roman constructions which were the means of redeeming the whole of Romney Marsh from the sea. If, then, to the two acres of St. Michael's on dry land, we add the many acres that are now under the sea, and then again the 192 acres long incorrectly known as the Parish of Holy Trinity, but which, undoubtedly, 700 years ago formed a substantial part of the Parish of St. Michael, we shall have no difficulty in recognising it as having been as important in those days, by reason of its size, as it is insignificant now, and that its boundaries very nearly coincided with those of that old Town in the Priory Valley, occupied successively by Briton, Roman, and by Saxon.

As the south-east of Britain was particularly accessible to sea rovers from the Continent, the Romans placed the harbours under the control of a great officer known as the Count of the Saxon Shore; and when the Saxon rule superseded that of Rome, an officer with like duties was appointed to rule these regions as Guardian of the Ports. In Edward the Confessor's reign, five Ports were, according to some, formally incorporated under a Lord Warden—Hastings, Dover, Sandwich, Hythe, and Romney. There are good reasons for believing that Hastings was at that time the most important of the five, and invested with

a kind of supremacy. For instance, her name generally ranks first.* Her banner, the banner of St. Michael's, was adopted as the banner of the Ports. In number of ships, she is on an equality with Dover, each contributing twenty-one, and far beyond the other three, who only contributed five each, or fifteen altogether. But at any rate, it is clear that Hastings was at least equal to Dover in consequence, and much more important than the other towns; and we may also fairly infer that she had long been associated with them; for we can scarcely imagine that towns such as Dover, Sandwich (Rutupiæ), and Hythe (Lymne), whom we have been confederated together in Roman times, would allow a port with which they had been previously but little connected, at one bound to assume the precedency. The question of the precedence of Hastings amongst the ports is not without interest to Archæologists. It was raised on the occasion of the Installation of Lord Palmerston as Lord Warden, in 1861, but no decision has been come to. But whether Hastings was the Premier Port or not, she was now in the zenith of her fame, contributing, as she did, more than a third of the entire naval force of the kingdom. Indeed, prior to the Conquest, Hastings seems to have comprised the whole Rape, and to have been considered as a county; and instead of being regarded as part of Sussex, to have ranked on equal terms with Sussex itself: for instance, we read in the

* This question will be found investigated at greater length in Chapter xii.

Saxon Chronicle*: "1011—They (the Danes) had overrun south of Thames—all Kent, and Sussex, and Hastings, and Surrey, and Berkshire, and Hampshire, and much of Wiltshire." The neighbourhood of Hastings must have suffered from these ravages; but the Port, in all probability strongly fortified, may have escaped unscathed. In the civil commotions of the reign of Edward, Hastings took her part. In 1050,† we learn that the men of Hastings and thereabout fought two of Godwin's ships with their ships, and slew all the men, and brought the ships to Sandwich to the King; and two years afterwards we find her fighting *against* the King, for Godwin enticed to him the boatmen (buss-carls) from Hastings, who declared they would live and die with him, and advanced with his fleet to London till he came to Southwark.

Her ancient connexion with Paris had been doubtless broken off when the Normans occupied the lower course of the Seine, and so interrupted the voyage to St. Denis. But the Confessor, half Norman in blood, renewed the connexion with the opposite coast by bestowing Rye, Winchelsea, and the Bourne Valley, not then included in Hastings, as dependencies of the Abbey of Fécamp, in Normandy; and we shall presently see reason to believe‡ that, in consesequence

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* Mon. Hist. Brit. 416.

† Mon. Hist. Brit., p. 441.

‡ Chap. v.

of the great prosperity of the mother-town, a new Hastings arose on the Abbot's land in the valley of the Bourne; and we are able, perhaps, to set down very nearly the exact date of the establishment of this new suburb, for the building of a church would certainly be coeval with a town built on an abbot's manor in such a pious reign. The church we know to have been dedicated to St. Clement; and while the surrounding ironworks may have had something to do with the selection of the Patron Saint of Iron-workers, yet I should like to call attention to the following singular circumstance: that while no less than eighteen of the names of the earlier Popes had been adopted by their successors, some many times over—so that up to that epoch there had been already six bearing the name of Gregory, seven of Boniface, eight of Leo, nine of Benedict, nine of Stephen, and eighteen of John—yet no one till 1046 chose to assume the name of Clement, though having so many claims to be respected, whether as associated with the Apostle Paul in Holy Scripture, or as the writer of the Epistles to the Corinthians, or as one of the earliest Bishops, or as a Canonised Saint of Rome. Here, then, we have, after an interval of nearly a thousand years, a Holy Father, by taking to himself the revered name of Clement, awakening anew the memories of Clemens Romanus throughout the Catholic Church. And is it not a fair assumption that the dedication of a church to St. Clement would be an event very likely to happen in the pontificate of

a Pope Clement II? The more especially as many other circumstances concur to render his reign, extending from 1046 to 1048, a probable date for the foundation of this new Burg.

The Confessor, by placing the keys of Sussex in the hands of the Abbot of Fécamp, an immediate vassal of William, Duke of Normandy, must have materially assisted the great enterprise of that Sovereign, who would appear, in these parts at least, rather as a lawful suzerain than as a public foe.

Where was the Navy of England? Where were the shipmen of Hastings at this great crisis in our history? They had been watching the vast expedition all the summer months with Harold at their head, but the great storm which partially shattered William's Armada, fatally misled them. They concluded the danger was over: the time for dispersing homeward had come. They were busy slaughtering their cattle and salting the carcases to make provision for the winter months. King Harold was called away to face danger in the north; and in an hour when they knew not, William and his mighty armament crossed the Channel without the slighest attempt to stay him, without a single blow being struck in defence of our shores!

The details of the great event which has given Hastings a world-wide fame will be found in the second part of this work.* Suffice now to say that on Edward's death and Harold's accession to the throne,

* The Battlefield.

William's formidable expedition, after starting from the Seine, and being tempest-driven into the vast estuary of the Somme, under the walls of the old town of St. Valeri, at length weighed anchor from Noyelles-Sur-Mer, and crossed over to this coast. The disembarkation apparently took place at various points between Pevensey and Hastings, the Conqueror himself landing at Bulverhythe. There is a stone at the entrance of our Public Gardens at St. Leonards, which formerly lay on the beach, on which tradition says he dined. There is also a very old tradition that the body of Harold was buried near the spot where this stone used to lie; and the stone has all the appearance of having been rudely shaped to form the covering of a tomb. It may therefore have marked the hero's last resting place.

Hastings was perhaps influenced, or even commanded by Remigius, one of the Monks of the Abbey of Fécamp, to open her gates. At any rate, we have no account of any attack on the one side, or of any resistance on the other, unless an incident in the Bayeux Tapestry indicates something of the sort, where we see a house in Hastings on fire, and fugitives making their escape; and it is far more simple to conceive this conflagration to have been occasioned by the invaders, than to imagine, with Mr. Planché, that the fire was the work of a Saxon incendiary. A description of this Tapestry will be found in the next chapter.

In 1873 the lines of William's Camp, overlooking

the haven, could still be traced in the Step Meadow (now Cornwallis Gardens), and some portion of them can yet be made out in the fields north of White Rock Villa.

CHAPTER IV.

The Bayeux Tapestry.

The Bayeux Tapestry may be regarded as the most authentic as well as the oldest monument extant of the Norman Conquest.* In the Cathedral of Bayeux, on the grand anniversaries of the Roman Church, there used to be exhibited a piece of linen called Duke William's Toilette, that reached exactly round the nave, in length about 210 feet, and in height about 20 inches; on this was embroidered in coloured wools a long and minute series of events, beginning with the end of Edward the Confessor's reign, and continuing to the defeat of the Saxons at Battle. This is doubly interesting to us—first, as describing the battle associated through all the ages with the name of our town; and secondly, as containing some representations of the town itself as it stood at that era. There has been some doubt as to the precise period to be assigned to the execution of this work, it having been ascribed to each of the three Matildas, to the wife of the Conqueror, to the wife of Henry I, and to his daughter the Empress; but there are circumstances in the Tapestry itself which

* We are fortunate in possessing a series of engravings of this Tapestry from drawings by Mr. Charles Alfred Stothard, which have been arranged upon rollers, and may be seen in the Hastings Literary Institution.

indubitably point to its connexion with Odo, Bishop of Bayeux. Setting aside King Edward, and the two leaders of the war, Odo stands forth the most conspicuous character portrayed; his person and name being repeated several times. No layman could well have interfered with the internal decorations of a Cathedral; but what could be more natural than for a Bishop, who performed such exploits, to order a record of them to be formed and placed in his own Cathedral to be viewed by future generations? In this embroidery we see many famous and familiar personages; but there are also recorded three obscure names—Turold, Wadard, and Vital;—and in Domesday Book we find a son of Turold, a Wadard, and a Vital, all vassals of Odo, Bishop of Bayeux. Why should vassals of Odo alone be recorded, unless the whole affair was closely connected with him? These men fought at Hastings under him; were perhaps commissioned by him as his servants to set forth the story of the Battle, and in so doing were unable to withstand the temptation of inserting their own names in the commemoration of an event in which they themselves had borne a part. From there being no description of them beyond their names, they must have been well known at the time the Tapestry was made, which shows that the Tapestry was contemporary with those persons; *i.e.*, it must have been embroidered in the period immediately succeeding the battle. The Tapestry being incomplete may be owing to Odo's imprisonment by his brother William,

from 1084 to 1087, followed by his unsuccessful revolt against William Rufus, and his shortly after accompanying Robert to the Holy Land. His ruin may have involved the ruin of his followers, and have put a stop to this memorial of his doughty deeds. Those who wish to see all the arguments on this point should turn to the "Essai Historique sur la ville de Bayeux" of M. Pluquet, or to the paper on the Bayeux Tapestry by Mr. Planché;* but neither of these writers has noted the singular propriety of the Cathedral of Bayeux being the depository of such a chronicle, inasmuch as the point on which the whole Epic turns is the perjury of Harold—the solemn oath sworn by him in this same Nave over the most sacred relics of the age, and broken afterwards. Taken in this connexion, the story is complete. We have the simple causes which led to Harold's visit to Normandy, and to his falling into William's power. His gallant services to William, and the honours paid him in return, are recounted in detail, as if to show that Harold was good and brave. Then Harold takes an awful oath—most awful in that superstitious age—awful to himself, and awful to all around. Soon the temptation comes, and proves too strong: in spite of oath, he becomes a crowned king. Heaven itself sends a warning sign of the doom that must befall a perjury so foul. And we then have the train of circumstances that led to his overthrow

* Jour. Br. Arch. Ass^n. June, 1867, page 134.

and death. Here the narrative fitly terminates, for though the embroidery is not quite finished—some figures being still in outline, and having never been filled in—yet it could not have been intended to go on much further, otherwise it would have been too long for the cathedral walls.

The faithful rendering of the arms, dress, and customs of any age, is quite a modern idea. In earlier times the writer or the draughtsman perhaps unconsciously bestowed on the beings of a previous era the armour and the habits of his own time. The embroiderers of the Tapestry described things as they saw them. Hence, if they were actors in the drama, we have before us the very shields and helms, the boats and bows, which were then in use; and since, from other sources, we know that such dresses and implements were in vogue at that period, we have a further corroboration of the accuracy of our date. Planché has pointed out in particular that the Normans are represented not only without beards or moustaches, but as having the backs of their heads shaven in a most extraordinary fashion; and how this agrees with the report made to Harold by his spies, that the Normans seemed like "shaven priests," will occur to all. Moreover, we read in an old chronicle that Frenchmen, about 70 years previously, were bare from the middle of their heads, with their beards shaven like minstrels. This singular custom, therefore, had prevailed for some time in France; whereas, a few years after the Conquest, the fashion so entirely

changed that the Archbishop of Canterbury himself preached against the long and effeminate locks of the young Norman knights, and would fain have applied the scissors himself. "The young men," says Dean Hook, "appeared with their long hair divided in front and curled, and actually combed it every day. Their hair fell in ringlets down their backs, and was often lengthened by the addition of false curls. They had also permitted their beards to grow. When Lent commenced, the Archbishop denounced the prevailing fashion, and declared that none should receive absolution who did not clip their hair and shave off their beards."

If, then, the Bayeux Tapestry had been designed after Anselm's time, the designers would have been sure to have represented the Normans with long hair. There is also a peculiarity in the ladies' garments and in the dress of the clergy which, coupled with the absence of horse armour, would render it unlikely that the work was of later date than that of Odo himself.

We do not look on Odo much in the light of a theologian; but we must remember that he necessarily had some training in divinity to fit him for his episcopal dignity: and to him, of all men, a sacrilege committed in his own great church would appear indeed profane.

The following is the order of events as they succeed one another in this unique sampler of mediæval needlework:—The scene opens with Edward on a

throne; then Harold, with hawk on wrist, rides towards Bosham, a port at the other end of Sussex, just out of Chichester, belonging to himself. The Church of Bosham is shewn, which one gazes on with interest, since some portions of that very church are standing as they did when Harold entered there. From Bosham, Harold is seen crossing the sea. He lands in the territory of Wido, Count of Ponthieu, and is arrested. At the interview between Harold and the Count, the name of a dwarf Turold occurs, who, having been accidentally present on this occasion, has his name inserted, owing most likely to his being father to one of the Commissioners presiding over the manufacture of this fabric. Wido presently conducts Harold to William at Rouen; and Harold and William converse in the Palace, parts of which are still in existence. Then follows the expedition against the Bretons. Here William the Duke and his army came to Mount St. Michael, and crossed a river; and here Harold the Duke dragged them *(i.e., some of the Normans)* from the sand. Lives are still lost from time to time in the dangerous quicksands near Mount St. Michael. It will be seen that Harold is depicted in a most favourable light. They next went on to Dol, and Conan the Count of Brittany turned in flight to Rennes, and thence to Dinan. Here the soldiers of William the Duke fight against the men of Dinan, and Conan stretches forth the keys at the end of a lance, in sign of surrender; and at Dinan, the victorious campaign being over, "William gave

arms to Harold"—a kind of knighting, accompanied with the gift of William's own armour—an incident that recalls King Saul giving his armour to David. "Here William came (back) to Bayeux, where Harold made oath to William." Harold, between two altars full of the bones of Martyrs and of Saints, bound himself under the most solemn curses to aid William to succeed Edward. At any epoch, the imagination would be impressed by this accumulation of holy relics; but, in that dark age, there would be few hardy enough to doubt that the violator of such a tremendous vow was doomed to destruction in this world and the next. That the Saxons were secretly disheartened, and the Normans emboldened by this recollection, had greatly to do with the final result of the Battle of Hastings. But this device served William in another way. When it became known that Harold was forsworn, his offence was, as it were, localised in every part of Western Europe. Every church, every monastery, which had lent its hallowed mementoes of the past, at once became a centre, where the profanity of Harold's deed would be the preacher's text, and the necessity of avenging the insult to their legendary Saint would be insisted on in every pulpit—in fact, the half military, half superstitious spirit that then dominated in men's breasts, easily prompted them into a crusade against the offender, and hosts of armed men were urged to range themselves under William's banner, partly moved by hopes of heavenly blessings,

partly, it is to be feared, by the lower motive of worldly gain, and partly stirred by revenge.

After this, Harold the Duke returned to the English land, and came to Edward the King. Here occurs a strange inversion in the order of things: for we find Edward's funeral delineated before his actual decease. The heading tells us, "Here the body of Edward the King is carried to the Church of St. Peter the Apostle." And we see the sad procession, and Westminster Abbey, as it stood then, just completed by the Confessor's pious efforts. Yet, in the very next scene the King is represented alive; for it is worded, "Here King Edward on his couch addresses his faithful friends:" and only in the next scene we come across the words, "Here he is dead." The following inscription is, "They gave the King's crown to Harold." This, surely, is an intimation that Harold's succession was due to a kind of popular vote, and not to any seizure of the throne on his part. Next we have, "Here Harold the King sits," with ball and sceptre, as if just invested with his coronation robes; near him is a figure rather reduced in size, Stigand the Archbishop; perhaps his dwarfed proportions are intended to be significant of his being under the Pope's interdict at the time. We might infer from his presence that Harold was crowned by him in defiance of the Papal excommunication, which some writers allege to have been the case. If so, this direct insult to the Pontiff, at a time when the power of the Popes was becoming so great, would go

far to augment the army of Crusaders against Harold.

We next see people gazing upwards at a blazing star or comet, and read the inscription, "They wonder at the star;" the appearance of which is alluded to in many contemporary writers: and this, in truth, would be looked on by the superstitious—*i.e.*, by nearly all the people of that age—as an evil omen, as against Harold, if not as a direct intimation from heaven of his guilt. We then have Harold attending to the report of some messenger; most likely, tidings of the Northern invasion of his brother Tosti and the Giant King of Norway. If no such allusion be intended, then that important event is passed over without notice. Under Harold are five ships, which may either be taken as a representation of the fleet of the invaders, or else there is a reference to Harold's having been Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, whose arms, there is reason to believe, were originally five ships. There seem to me many instances of armorial bearings in the Tapestry, Planché to the contrary notwithstanding.

The next heading reads, "Here an English ship comes into the land of William the Duke," conveying, no doubt, the intelligence that Harold, contrary to his oath, is firmly established in the sovereignty of England. It will be noticed that most of the inscriptions in the Tapestry begin with "Here." William is represented as acting with great promptitude on hearing the tidings, "Here William the Duke ordered

them to build ships." Odo would appear to have been present when the order was given, for a dignified person, in the garb of a priest, is with William.

The artists had singular notions on the subjects of trees, for of all the trees, (and there are a good many here and there throughout the panorama, and especially in this forest of trees to be cut down for ship-building,) there is not one but what it would have been prudent for the artist to have written underneath, *this is a tree;* they are, in fact, of such monstrous shape that the last thing we should think of in connexion with them would be to identify them with the graceful denizens of a wood. The ships being completed, "Here they drag the ships to the sea," instead of launching them. We might infer from this dragging, that the ships, as a rule, were not very large: indeed, in one case, the ship-builder has the boat between his legs, which shows, at any rate, that some of the vessels were very small. The Latin of the inscriptions is not always good, and in the next inscription we see the Latin neuter "arma" turned into a low Latin feminine "armas," perhaps giving us a glimpse of the process by which the French language lost the neuter gender. "These are carrying arms to the ships, and here they drag a waggon with wine and arms." The arms include suits of chain-armour, spears, and the helmets of the period, which are terribly ugly, resembling nothing so much as a sauce-pan put on the top of the head with the handle hanging down in front as a protection to the nose.

That they attended to their creature comforts is visible in the great barrel of wine placed carefully in a cart, which is also made to carry their spears and conical helmets with the long nose-pieces.

In the next scene we have the crossing—"Here William the Duke, in a great ship, has crossed the sea, and come to Pevenesæ." The great ship has at its masthead a banner with a cross, most likely the consecrated banner sent by the Pope. In the passage the horses' heads are seen peering over the sides of many of the vessels. Then comes the landing—"Here the horses are coming out of the ships." The horses' legs, for some reason not quite obvious, are usually of unlike colours, sometimes all four different; "and here," the inscription goes on to say, "the soldiers hastened to Hastinga to seize food" *(ut cibum raperentur)*, another specimen of dog-Latin. This is the first mention of our town in this story of the invasion. Then we have, "Here is Wadard." We know nothing of Wadard historically, but his *raison d'être* is pretty clear, when we find his name in Domesday, as a vassal of Odo. His being on horseback, apparently giving orders to some soldiers, and his wielding a truncheon, shew him to be a person of rank, and in point of fact, we find him holding manors in no less than six English counties, and particularly in Odo's Earldom of Kent. He may therefore, with certainty, be assumed to have been one of Odo's chief officers, and as such, may either have caused his person and name to have been inserted

in the Tapestry, or those who were employed in the business may have thought that a soldier who must have been of great importance in their eyes, whatever he was to the world at large, should have the fact of his having followed Odo to the field registered in this record of the Bishop's deeds.

"Here meat is being cooked." All great Generals have attended to their Commissariat Department, and we meet with several indications that this was not neglected by the Conqueror—"and here the attendants ministered, and here they had their dinner, and here the Bishop blesses the food and drink." The Bishop is to the left of the Duke; in the next compartment we have the Bishop again, with both his brothers, the Duke and Robert Count of Mortagne—"Odo the Bishop, William, Robert." It is not quite certain which of the brothers gave the order mentioned in the next heading—"He ordered a castle to be dug at Hestenga Ceastra." The term "dug" is very applicable to the immense ditches which used to defend Hastings Castle, and one of which remains to this day. We see men depicted in the act of digging these fosses, two of them quarrelling. After the trenches were made, the two wooden castles which the provident Prince had caused to be transported from Normandy, may have been placed in the two courts or baileys thus formed; but as soon as William felt himself firmly established on English soil, I have no doubt orders were given to replace these wooden structures by masonry. I believe the great western wall of the

Castle to have been standing at the time, and to have been found so strong that the Normans availed themselves of it as part of their defence. The term "at" for "ad," which Mr. Planché considers a mark of the Saxon dialect then still used in Bayeux, I should rather look on as another bit of corrupt Latin—since *at* for *ad* is occasionally met with in the later and inferior Latin writers. I have elsewhere dwelt on the importance of the term Hestenga Ceastra, as pointing to a Roman origin of our town. The peculiar spelling Ceastra, probably an adaptation to the prevalent mode of pronouncing the word at that time, is worth noting, as showing how Castra gradually degenerated into Chester, and Cester. "Here news is brought to William about Harold." We are reminded how much had occurred in the interval; how much William had to learn. Eight days before he landed, Tostig and the Norwegian had defeated the English near York. Three days before the landing Harold won a counter victory at Stamford Bridge. Harold was still at York, 260 miles away from Hastings, the day after the landing; the announcement of which seems to have reached him with incredible rapidity. In a fortnight, Harold was at Battle—which is, I suppose, the news that was brought to William. "Here a house is burnt." It would seem to be *in* Hastings, and to shew that the town was wholly or partially destroyed. In Domesday Book many places in these districts are marked as having been devastated. "Here the soldiers marched

out of Hastings and went to fight against Harold the King." The Pope's banner is carried along with the marching host. There is a representation of one of the fortified gates of Hastings; unfortunately, we do not even know where to look for its site. "Here William the Duke asks Vital if he had seen the army of Harold." Vital is only known to us in Domesday as another vassal of Odo. At this point we have a momentary glance at the opposite camp, "This man tells Harold of the army of William the Duke;" but are immediately carried back to the Normans; "Here William addresses his soldiers, in order that they should *(prepararent)* prepare themselves manfully and wisely for the fight against the army of the English." Then follows the actual fight, with no inscription. The Normans have horsemen armed with lances, and bowmen, several of whom are drawn on the lower margin, giving the appearance of flanking the Norman approach. The Saxons are on foot, and many of them have their bills or axes resting on their shoulders, precisely as they are described in Wace's "Roman de Rou." The next inscription reads, "Here fell Lewine and Gyrd, the brothers of Harold." This makes their fall earlier than in other accounts; but this one must surely be the most trustworthy. At this point we find the first trace of the embroidery never having been quite completed, for a small piece of the work is outlined, but not filled in.

We are next introduced to the most characteristic

feature of the conflict. The heading is, "Here fell together English and French." There is an eminence with a gentle ascent on the Saxon side, but descending precipitously into a swamp on the opposite side. English foot-soldiers are on the top of this eminence from which the Normans appear to have been driven headlong, and English and French are mingled *pêle mêle* at the base. Several horsemen are dismounted and slain, and the horses are in every conceivable attitude, and seem to have literally rolled over. One unfortunate animal in particular may be seen standing on its head. This, no doubt, alludes to the celebrated Mal Fosse, into which the Norman chivalry were precipitated while fleeing from the Saxons after their charge on the Saxon entrenchments had been repulsed. The Author believes he has identified this Mal Fosse; the reasons for the identification will be found in the second part of this work. The next scene is inscribed, "Here Odo the Bishop, holding a club, comforts the boys," *i.e.*, encourages the camp-followers, who were dismayed when they witnessed the discomfiture of the Norman Knights. The Tapestry begins to be very incomplete here. The next heading is, "Here is Duke William," who is represented as raising his helmet, so that his features may be clearly seen by his soldiery. Beside him, and pointing him out, is Eustace, Count of Boulogne.*

* We have here, to my mind, a very strong proof that heraldic bearings were already in use, for the Count carries a standard having a cross with four roundels or balls, which were

It would seem as if some rumour had got about that William was killed, and that a panic in consequence was spreading amongst the invaders, already discouraged by the disaster at the Mal Fosse, and by the confusion which was reigning in the rear. William's act certainly had the desired effect of rallying his hesitating army; and the next inscription reads, "Here the French fight." This was their final and victorious assault, for we next read, "And those who were with Harold fell," and the panorama fitly closes with that to which the whole has been leading—"Here Harold the King is killed." And it may be noted that his fall is dwelt on at length. The Dragon, the famous Saxon Standard, is by his side. His figure is repeated several times—once in particular, when he is attempting to wrench the fatal arrow from his eye; and once again, when a cowardly knight is gashing his leg as he falls. Then a confused medley of pursuing Normans, retreating Saxons, and the ground strewed with the dead and dying, and one ghastly feature of the fray occurs again and again—the stripping of the bodies of the slain of their coats of mail, and in some cases the dead bodies are drawn as

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actually the arms in after-times of the Counts of Boulogne; he also has a badge on his breast with the same device. The balls or "boules" being a kind of pun on Boulogne, such as we so often meet with in heraldry; as in the *Ver non semper viret*, the motto of the Vernons; and the motto of my own family, *Cole Deum, regem serva;* and WACE particularly tells us that every Frenchman wore some badge or cognizance by which he could be known.

they lay after they were stripped. Here, with figures only half embroidered, the frayed Tapestry comes to an end; and we leave off with regret our account of this most interesting, because most ancient and graphic record of our forefathers.

NOTE.—The following places in the Rape of Hastings are expressly mentioned in Domesday as having been devastated since the reign of Edward the Confessor; Bexhill, Bulverhythe, Crowhurst, Hollington, Guestling, Pett, Northiam, and Netherfield. They are all within ten miles of Hastings, and all but the last two within five miles.

CHAPTER V.

THE NEW BURG OF DOMESDAY.

The Corporation of the Cinque Ports was confirmed anew, with all its former privileges, in the fourth year after the Conquest. Hastings still contributed 21 ships, out of a total of 57; and her varying fortunes may henceforth be noted by the quota actually furnished at different periods.

Mr. Knocker says,* "Soon after the record of the Domesday was compiled, in the fourth year after the Conquest, William I granted a Charter to the Cinque Ports." But the record of Domesday was not commenced till the fourteenth year, and not finished till the twentieth of William.

Fourteen years, then, after the Conquest, King William ordered an exact account to be taken of all the manors of the kingdom. This inventory appears to be exhaustive as far as it goes, but such places as were, if I may coin the term, "extra manorial," are only incidentally noticed. Amongst such we must reckon Hastings. That so slight notice should be taken of her, though she had been so distinctly recognised as a Cinque Port, is certainly remarkable.

The solitary passage, however, in which Hastings is

* Court of Shepway, p. 21.

mentioned, is one to which I wish particularly to draw attention. It reads as follows :—

"Land of the Church of Fécamp. In *Ghestlinges hundred* (Guestling). The *Abbot* of Fécamp holds of the King *Rameslie* : he held it of King Edward, and then was rated for twenty hides, but now for 17½. The land is 35 carucates. In the demesne is one carucate ; and 100 villani, less one, have 43 carucates. There are five churches returning 64 shillings, 100 salt pans of 8 pounds and 15 shillings, and 7 acres of meadow, and forest for the feeding of 2 pigs. In the manor itself is a new "burg," and there are 43 burgesses, returning £8 less 2s. In Hastings, 4 burgesses and 14 bordarii return 63s. Of this manor, Robert of Hastings holds 2 hides and a half of the Abbot, and Herolf half a hide. They themselves have 4 villani and 4 cotarii,* and 2 carucates. The whole manor in the time of King Edward was worth £30. Now £50 is the value of the demesne of the Abbot, that of the men 44 shillings."

The Saxon "hide" is of variable extent, but may be calculated at 120 acres. The Norman "carucate" is likewise variable, but in the present instance it may

* In Earle's Philology of the English tongue, p. 314, occurs the following extract from a MS. of the 17th century, which seems to throw some light on the term *cotarii* : "An Esquire was Costrel to a Knight, the bearer of his shield and helm, serving on horse-back, whereof every Knight had two at the least in attendance upon him, in respect of the fee, for they held their land of the Knight by *Cottage*, as the Knight held his of the King by Knight service."

be reckoned at 60 acres; since 35 carucates, we see above, answer to 17½ hides, or 2 carucates to a hide. In Lingard* we read, "Sussex was computed to contain 7000 hides of land.—Bed. iv. 13." This, at 120 acres the hide, would give an area of 1312½ square miles, the actual size of the County now being 1451 square miles.

With regard to the terms "bordarii," "villani," and "cotarii," Hallam says:† "In Domesday, the word ceorl never occurs. This is immaterial; for by the name *villani* we have upwards of 108,000. And this word is frequently used in the first Anglo-Norman reigns as the equivalent of ceorl. No one ought to doubt that they expressed the same persons. But we find also a very numerous class, above 82,000, styled *bordarii*—a word unknown, I apprehend, to any other document; certainly not used in the laws anterior to the Conquest. They must, however, have been ceorls, distinguished by some legal difference, some peculiarity of service or tenure, well understood at the time. . . . There are also several minor denominations in Domesday, all of which, as they do not denote slaves, and certainly not thanes, must have been varieties of the ceorl kind. The most frequent of these appellations is cotarii."

Before eorl became a special title, the Saxon freemen were divided into eorls and ceorls, gentle and simple.

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* Hist. Eng. i, 95.

† Eur. during Mid. Ages, Supp. p. 216.

The eorl was a gentleman, the ceorl a yeoman, but both were free; and though the latter was not generally an independent freeholder, yet he could become an eorl or thane if he acquired five hides. As a knight's fee also consisted of five hides, it follows that the Norman knight and Saxon thane must have corresponded closely in position. The comparatively free ceorls degenerated under various circumstances into "villani," or dependant cultivators under superior lords.

Moss, in speaking of the passage we have quoted from Domesday, observes that "Hastings seems to have been closely connected with a place called Rameslie, but no place in the neighbourhood at least is now in existence."* Rameslie, however, is clearly to be identified with the Manor of Brede. A rough estimate of its extent, as described in Domesday, would give about 5000 acres; it must, therefore, have occupied a considerable part of the Hundred of Guestling; so does the present Manor of Brede. It extended through that part of the Hundred bordering on Hastings; Brede Manor extends throughout the valley of the Bourne. The Abbot of Fécamp held the Manor of Rameslie in Guestling, under the Confessor and the Conqueror; succeeding Abbots have, for several centuries, held the Manor of Brede in Guestling. The change, then, must have been merely one of name. In fact, Rameslie may, even

*. Moss's Hastings, p. 5.

then, have been known by the name of Brede or Brid; and Brid, whom we have seen to have been Master of the Hastings Mint under Edward the Confessor, may have derived his name from it as his birth-place.

Mr. Cooper argues* that the New Burg, in the Manor of Rameslie, cannot be Hastings, because Domesday expressly says, that there were four burgesses in Hastings (as distinct from the New Burg) yielding sixty-three shillings to the said Manor, and that Robert of Hastings held two hides and a half from the Abbot of Fécamp, who held Rameslie; and I quite agree with him that the Hastings of that day *was not included* in the Manor of Rameslie or Brede; but the present Hastings *is included* in the Manor of Brede. It consequently must, at some time or other, have actually occupied the position of a New Burg, or town, on the Abbot's land. If so, can we resist the conclusion that it was the New Burg mentioned in Domesday Book? Also, if we adopt this hypothesis there would then be no inconsistency in burgesses of Old Hastings holding lands in an adjoining suburb; nay, further, the intimate connexion of burgesses of Hastings with this Manor, and with no other in the whole of Domesday, would make it antecedently highly probable that a new town should spring up within this very Manor as an offshoot from the parent town. Now, when would such an occurrence be more

* Cooper's Winchelsea, p. 5.

likely to take place than when the old town was in its most flourishing state, in the reign of Edward, the exact period in which we first hear of this New Burg?

But Mr. Cooper proceeds to identify the New Burg with his own town of Winchelsea, in which he has been anticipated by Moss; yet I cannot understand how he reconciles his conjecture with the fact that Rye and Winchelsea were never held by the Abbot in connexion with Guestling Hundred at all, nor as any part of the Manor of Rameslie; but they were always held and reckoned as part of the Manor of Steyning. To prove this, I give an extract from the Charter of Resumption, by Henry III, A.D. 1247, witnessed to amongst others by Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, and Richard, Earl of Cornwall, afterwards King of the Romans.*

"By means of Winchelsea and Rye, which are called the more noble members of our Cinque Ports, which the Abbot and Monks of Fécamp have hitherto possessed, to whom it is not lawful to contend with material arms against the enemies of the realm, irrecoverable loss might happen, which God forbid, to us and to our heirs in time of war, if in such wise they remained without defence in the hands of the Abbot and Monks. Wherefore, under the advice of the nobles of our realm, and with the good will of the said Abbot and Monks of Fécamp, we have resumed the aforesaid towns of Winchelsea and Rye, with the

* Holloway's Rye, p. 278.

harbours and advowson of the churches as far as the fief of Guestling, giving and by this charter confirming to the same Abbot and Monks of Fécamp, for us and for our heirs, in good and sufficient exchange for the aforesaid towns of Winchelsea and Rye, our fief of Cheltenham, in the county of Gloucester, to be held of us and of our heirs by the aforesaid Abbot and Monks for ever, as freely and quietly as they held Winchelsea and Rye, by reason of the gift made to them by St. Edward of happy memory, and of the concessions and confirmations had afterwards from William and Henry, Kings of England, of the land of STEYNING *with all its appurtenances, amongst which were reckoned Winchelsea and Rye.*"

Where, then, was the "New Burg" in the Hundred of Guestling, and Manor of Rameslie? It was neither Rye nor Winchelsea; for at that very time, we have the above indisputable evidence, that *they* were appurtenances of the Hundred of Steyning. Guestling and Pett, though included in the Hundred of Guestling, formed no part of the Manor of Rameslie, being referred to independently in Domesday Book; Fairlight and Icklesham, the remaining parishes of the Hundred, also formed no part of the Abbot's demesne, being under the jurisdiction of the Counts of Eu as fiefs of the Barony of Hastings; the Manor of Icklesham is still held of that Barony and pays yearly to the Lord of the Barony 18s. as Castle Guard rent: and the waste of the Manor is still

claimed and granted out by him. But in one, and only one corner of Brede or Rameslie, we find a town, forming in fact great part of what we now familiarly understand by Hastings. Its insulated position, in a distinct valley, defended by separate fortifications—which Mr. E. Roberts, F.S.A.,* after a careful inspection of the town wall, pronounced to be rather earlier than the Conquest, *i.e.*, contemporary with the foundation of the Burg—would sufficiently satisfy the conditions implied in the term Burg; and if the term involves privileges, they are likely enough to have been conferred on what was substantially a new limb of an ancient Port.

The limits of this New Burg appeared to be defined by the East Hill on the one side, and the West or Castle Hill on the other, and the existing town wall, which may be still traced about fifteen yards to the north of John Street and East Bourne Street, and very probably was continued along the north of George Street, as far as the Light Steps (as it terminates there in the Corporation Map).

Tenements and lands, held of Brede Manor, occur in every part of the valley; but the continued practice of enfranchisement makes it difficult to mark the exact boundaries, though it seems in general to agree with the limits I have given. Messrs. Ross and Cooper make Bourne Street the eastern boundary of the Manor; if it be so, I should imagine that this was

* On the occasion of the visit of the Brit. Arch. Ass^{n}. 1866.

once also the boundary of the Burg, as it would then take the line of the Bourne, as far as the Court House, where once stood the massive towers of the Water Gate; and in that case, the district on the other side of the Bourne (the lower part of All Saints' Street) may have been included in some later extension of the town—*e.g.*, when it was rebuilt in 1380. It confirms this view that the gate at the bottom of All Saints' Street was known as the New Gate, and was, indeed, only reached by a flight of steps practicable for foot-passengers, whence may be derived the other name of Pulpit Gate, which it once bore. It is also a corroboration of this, that as late as 1746 there was no bridge across the Bourne lower than the Court House. The remains of the principal gate of the town, known as the Drawbridge Gate, were discovered about 1856, when some drainage works were being carried out.*

It may be interesting to my fellow-townsmen to know that the custom of Borough English, or the right by which the youngest inherits the copyhold, to the exclusion of the elder sons (which is almost peculiar to this part of the country), prevails in so much of their town as is included in the Manor of Brede.

Domesday Book informs us that there were five churches in this Manor, which Mr. Cooper thus

* The position of these gates is marked in the Map of 1291, chap. ix.

distributes: One to Rye, two to Winchelsea, one to Brede, and the fifth he considers to be St. Leonards, which, though in the liberties of Hastings, is actually situated on the confines of modern Winchelsea. Now, I think I have shewn good reasons why the first three churches must be sought for elsewhere than in Winchelsea and Rye, and also that we might expect to meet with them in the Bourne Valley; but from very ancient times *there have been three*, and only three in that valley: St. Clement's, destroyed in 1236, and probably situated near the Light Steps, for the present St. Clement's was built in 1286, by the Abbot of Fécamp, on a different site, on land obtained from Alan de Chesmongre, and again rebuilt about 1380; All Saints, mentioned in 1291, and rebuilt, in all likelihood, shortly before 1436, when we find it referred to as the New Church; and St. George, situated on St. George's or the East Hill, which was destroyed previously to 1380, and never rebuilt. To these three churches I would add the two enumerated by Mr. Cooper—St. Leonards, near Winchelsea, still within our Corporation bounds; and St. George's, of Brede; and these, all within the precincts of the Manor, I confidently believe, are the five churches of the Domesday Survey.

It has already been remarked* that in 1046 the memory of Clemens Romanus was brought home to every member of the Catholic Church through the

* Chap. iii.

Holy Father's selection of the name of Clement; and there is a probability that a church built during his short reign (1046-1048) would be dedicated to the Saint whose name the Pope had elected to bear: and this date of the foundation of the New Burg, derived from ecclesiastical considerations, exactly coincides with the age assigned by Mr. Roberts to the town walls for architectural reasons. The name of All Saints may be said to carry us at least back as far as the time of Edward the Confessor; for it is a dedication said to indicate where it occurs, that a church existed there in Saxon times; and, indeed, there is nothing to prevent its having a much older date than the New Burg itself. The old tradition of the place, handed down from father to son, through many generations, makes it vie in antiquity almost with St. Martin of Canterbury.

As the New Burg is identified with All Saints and St. Clement's by the possessions of the Abbot of Fécamp, the old Burg or Town of Hastings must have coincided with the parishes of St. Michael, St. Margaret, St. Peter, St. Andrew, and St. Leonards.

The Abbot's new town had 43 burgesses of sufficient importance to be rated, who would, with their families, amount to more than 200, and would necessitate the presence of a still larger number of dependants; but it continued a mere suburb for three centuries. The Manor contained an unusual supply of salt pans—or shallow reservoirs for the obtaining salt by the gradual evaporation of sea water. The 100 salt pans correspond

almost exactly to the number of the 99 villani. Wherever these pans were—and they were somewhere within the Manor—there must have been a large tract of land, flat, and liable to be flooded by the sea. Of course this may have been in the neighbourhood of Brede Bridge, where there is plenty of flat land, and which, likely enough in those days, was flooded by the sea at high water. Yet we have no record or trace of such an important manufacture having ever existed there; if the level land, however, was connected with our Bourne Valley, as the large number of villani would lead us to believe, then the entire disappearance of this level would be an additional argument in favour of our coast having in former days stretched much further to the south than it does now: and here also we are in perfect agreement with the most ancient traditions.

We may draw a curious contrast between these hundred salt pans, on the one hand, producing an annual revenue of £8 15s. to the Superior Lord, a sixth part of the whole rental of the Manor, and the extent of forest on the other, which we are gravely informed was calculated to be sufficient for the feeding of two pigs. On what ground they formed their estimate of a pig's appetite in those days I do not know, but I was particularly struck some time since, on turning over the pages of Geikie's Great Ice Age, to find that the excessive number of salt pans actually accounted for the paucity of forest, and so indirectly for the

extremely limited number of pigs. An extract will explain this :—*" Salt Pans, a cause of destruction to Forests : The great number of salt pans that were early established in Scotland, and the right which the proprietors usually obtained to cut the requisite fire-wood from the forests of the country, was another cause of destruction, and much timber disappeared in this way from the maritime districts."

* Geikie's Great Ice Age, p. 333.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CASTLE.

FROM the high ground of Fairlight two spurs run in a south-westerly direction to the sea, one known as the East, the other as the West Hill; on each are signs of primitive fortifications, the East, as has already been pointed out, shewing evident traces of Roman work. Both Hills have a gradual descent, but the West Hill has this peculiarity, that just near its termination it suddenly rises into a plateau some three acres in extent. This formation is very obvious when looked at from the west. This was doubtless crowned by the fortress that guarded the Saxon Mint; and the western wall of the Castle, [marked W G O in the plan] without a bastion or projecting tower in its entire length (which would have surely not have been the case if built by Normans), appears to be a surviving part of the earlier Saxon edifice; moreover, the cement used in this portion is very ancient, being mortar intermixed with small flints and pebbles. Between this plateau and the sea was a much lower terrace, at about the same level as the rest of the Hill, the only portion now remaining lying below the Lady's Parlour at the back of the Coastguard Station. To defend this a trench,

still traceable, was drawn about 100 feet east of the Lady's Parlour; this has ever since marked the limits of the Castle precincts, being at the present day the boundary of the Castle Parish.

The present Castle Parish is a very large one, and extends a long way into the County, and perhaps answers to the old Castle Demesne. The County portion contains 790 acres, and corresponds in a measure to the Manor of Yielding (now, together with Gensing, the property of the Eversfields). The Manor House near Old Roar, and the Demesne, are both marked in the map of 1291.

The Norman engineer was not satisfied with a single enceinte for the plateau. He considered that there should be both an inner and outer Bailey or Court, so that if the one should be stormed, there should be a second to retire to. It became necessary therefore to dig across this table-land, so as to separate the Castle proper from the work known to us as the Lady's Parlour. We thus understand the full force of the order in the Tapestry, that a Castle should be dug at *Hastings Chester;* "iste jussit ut castellum foderetur at Hestenga Ceastra;" underneath these words is the picture of a Castle on the summit of the Hill, where our Castle now stands, seemingly implying that there was already an older fortification there. The expression *foderetur*, "should be dug," is advisedly used; witness the deep trench on the eastward side of the Castle, and a corresponding trench

which existed till about 20 years ago to the westward, isolating a small portion of the Hill, of a pyramidal shape, having an area of but a few yards at the top, on which a flagstaff used to be placed This has since been cut away to make room for buildings. There could have been no motive in isolating by an immense trench, a mere peak from the rest of the Hill, so we have clearly here an indication that the peak was a mere remnant of a considerable part of the Hill, which at this particular point was not precipitous, but sloped with an easy descent to the west (where Wellington Square is now), rendering it necessary to defend the Castle in this quarter by a ditch. The following is a description of the Castle as it stood some years before 1824,* in which year a portion of the Castle area was excavated, and many of the remains now visible were uncovered :—

"What remains of the Castle approaches nearest in shape to two sides of an oblique spherical triangle, having the points rounded off. The base, or south side, next to the sea, completing the triangle, is formed by a perpendicular craggy cliff about 400 feet in length, upon which are no vestiges of a wall or other fortification. On the east side are the remains of a plain wall, formerly measuring near 300 feet, without tower or defence of any kind. [The towers marked P, Q, R, on the Plan were then covered with turf.] The adjoining side, which faces the

* Grose, v. 149.

north-west, is about 400 feet long, consequently the area included is about an acre and one-fifth. The walls, nowhere entire, are about eight feet thick. The gateway, now demolished, was on the north side, near the northernmost angle. Not far from it, to the west, are the remains of a small tower, enclosing a circular flight of stairs [K]; and still further westward, a sally-port and ruins of another tower [G]. On the east side, at the distance of about 100 feet, ran a ditch 100 feet in breadth; but both the ditch and the interval between it and the wall seem to have narrowed by degrees as they approached the gate, and to have terminated under it.* On the north-west side was another ditch of the like breadth, commencing at the cliff opposite to the westernmost angle, and bearing away almost due north, leaving a level intermediate space, which, opposite to the sally-ports, was 180 feet in breadth."

The massy walls on the west of the present structure were, as has been said, probably already in existence at the Conquest; but the eastern wall and towers from [L] to [M] were commenced about the time of the battle, and, as at Pevensey, the Norman Castle

* In Grose's plan the eastern ditch gradually narrows to 20 feet, and this narrow entrance appears flanked on each side by stonework, as if the approach to the fosse itself was guarded: and there also appears a passage in the rock running from the Entrance towards [L], and thus affording a means of communication between the Northern Gateway and the ditch invisible to an enemy.

was placed within the area of older works, which were retained where serviceable.

All that now remains of the Chapel is the chancel [V] and the sacristy [U], in which is a deep circular arched recess, and a tower [K], also circular, with a flight of steps running up it. In the side wall is a range of arches, supposed to be the backs of the prebendal stalls [O]. A portion also of the western end remains towering above the other walls, shewing the length of the chapel, which is 110 feet. The walls of the Castle at the gateway opposite the Lady's Parlour are 12 feet thick; *i.e.*, including the passage in the thickness of the wall. The groove for the portcullis is still visible at [S].

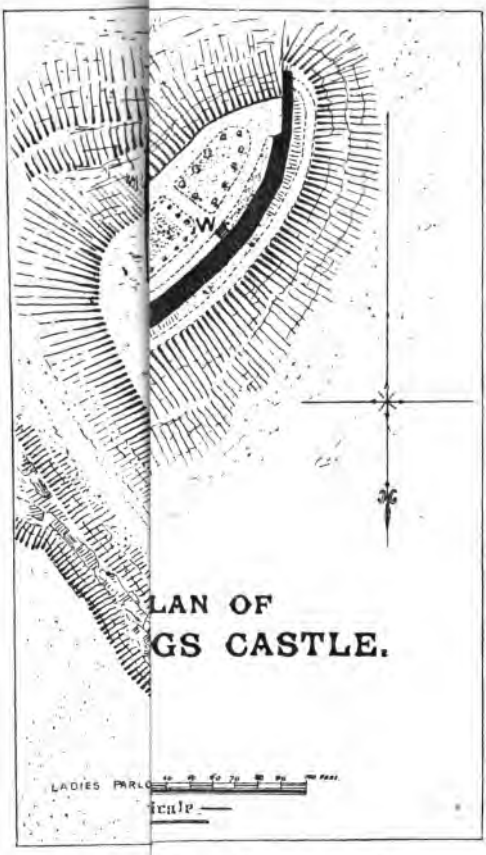
Some writers have imagined that, as there is no wall on the seaward side of the Castle, there never was any: but it is simply an evidence that some portion of the ground formerly occupied by the Castle is gone; a fact testified to by the Old Chronicles. Even if it abutted on a precipice, as it does now, some kind of parapet would have existed to guard against the danger of the inmates falling over the edge. The western wall shows signs of change of direction, but none of coming to an end, while the eastern wall at its extremity [M] gives clear indications that the ground at that very point began to slope downwards, and that the wall was intended to follow that downward slope. The walls suffered in 1331 from the overflowing of the sea, which implies that some part of the Castle was at a much lower level than any part is

now. As far as one can form a judgment from the ground plan of what remains, it might be conjectured that the original outline was an oblong with rounded corners, and that the present cliff corresponded to the diagonal of the oblong. This would make the old area about twice as large as the present. It must have been at least as large as this, seeing that, in addition to the accommodation required for its garrison, it contained a Mint, and many of the Canons had houses within the walls, one Canon in particular having two; and in 1275 there was a return of the value of the herbage *within* and without the Castle.

The Lady's Parlour, separated from the ruins by a huge ditch [J], in some parts 60 feet deep, communicated by a drawbridge with the Eastern Gateway [S], still flanked by two round towers [Q, R]. This Lady's Parlour may have been the Tilt-yard; and as I believe it to have been (before the ditch was dug) part of the Saxon Castle, I suspect that the mounds which guard it to the north and to the east mask from our sight the foundations of the walls of the ancient stronghold.

To the Norman Castle of Hastings there is this special reference in Domesday: "Land of the Count of Eu. In Bexelei* Hundred, Osbern holds Bexelei of the Count. In the time of King Edward, Bishop Alric held it, for it is of the Bishopric, and afterwards

* Bexelei, or Bexle Island (Bexhill being an innovation of the last century). The "ei," which distinguishes so many places in this neighbourhood, has, in this instance, been dropped; the orthography varies, as, "ey" in Pevensey, "ea" in Winchelsea.



LAN OF
GS CASTLE.

A—Nave. Towers flanking the Eastern
B—Chapter Entrance.
and Dewbridge-Gateway, and Portcullis.
C—Vestry rth Gateway.
D—Stone Gr ristry.
E—Traces ancel.
Arches. aces of Machicolation.
F—Chancel

he held it until King William gave to the Count the Governorship of the Castle of Hastings. In the time of King Edward and now it is rated for 20 hides. The land is 26 carucates." A part of the Hundred is described as having been laid waste, the fate of many places round about.* When the Rape of Hastings was conferred on Count Robert, he appears to have influenced the King to detach the Manor of Bexhill from the Bishopric, and assign it to himself. The Bishops naturally protested against this arrangement, and though this Manor was held by three generations of the Counts of Eu, yet in the reign of Stephen, 1148, they were induced to restore it to the See of Chichester.

Our interest in the quotation from Domesday is that it shews that the Count was actually Governor of the Castle when that Book was written, and therefore we may assume the Castle was completed prior to 1086, when the Domesday Survey was finished. Count Robert, a valiant soldier, and eminent for his scholarship even among Abbots and Bishops, especially distinguished himself in the great battle, and was rewarded with many Manors. In Sussex they amounted to 60 Knights' fees, and for several reigns the custody of the Castle was in the hands of his family. He was the founder of the Church and College of the Blessed Virgin Mary, sometimes described as *below*, sometimes as *within* the Castle

* See Note, page 69.

Walls. He was himself a scion of the Ducal House of Normandy, as will be seen in the following table:

Richard, Duke of Normandy.
|
William, Count of Eu (illegitimate).
|
Robert, Count of Eu, ob. 1090, 1st Governor.
|
William, Count of Eu, ob. 1096.
|
Henry, Count of Eu, ob. 1139, turned Monk.
|
John, Count of Eu, ob. 1170, turned Monk.
|
Henry, Count of Eu, ob. 1199.
|
Alice, Countess of Eu, ob. 1246, m. Ralph,
| Count of Eu, ob. 1218.
William, Count of Eu, forfeited the Rape 1221,
for siding with the French.

Authorities differ as to when tournaments began; but if it be conceded that Geoffrey de Pruilly laid down the laws and ceremonies of tournaments as early as the middle of the 11th century, then there may be some truth in the legend* that the first tournament in England took place within the precincts of our Castle.

Let us in imagination picture the Count of Eu, the Castle's Lord, escorting to her throne the Conqueror's daughter, Princess Adela, and a gay and brilliant cavalcade of gallant Knights and Ladies fair crossing the drawbridge into the Lady's Parlour; the centre

* Walcot's South Coast, p. 155.

barricaded off for the contests of the tourney, and commanded by a gallery from which the Queen of Love and Beauty surveys the scene, encircled with a galaxy of high-born dames and maidens, the Castellain himself holding the lists against all comers and victorious against all, until Stephen, Count of Blois, unhorses him, and so secures the highest honours of the day. As Stephen stoops before the Queen to receive the wreath of victory at her hands, a mutual love is wakened in their hearts; she loves him for the dangers he has passed, and he loves her that she does pity them. Soon they are wed, and from this union springs another Stephen—England's future King.

Adela's brother, William Rufus, on arriving in England in 1087, after the death of his father, made it his first care to secure the Castle of Hastings, where he often afterwards resided: according to some accounts, he sent over Odo of Rye from France to take it by surprise. In 1091, before sailing to Normandy, he summoned his Nobles hither to swear fealty. In 1093 his army mustered at Hastings to cross the Channel, but was detained by contrary winds a whole month, during which the King lodged in the Castle. In the following year, 20,000 men were encamped here preparatory to a war with France, but William, giving up his design, dismissed them, first of all, however, taking from them the 10s. a head travelling money they had received from their counties: ten shillings then was at least as much as ten pounds now.

In 1095 he was at Hastings again, owing to the consecration of Battle Abbey, which was begun to be built immediately after the battle on the very ground on which Harold had fought and died, and which was now completed, and to be dedicated to St. Martin.

The second Governor, William Count of Eu, revolted unsuccessfully against Rufus; and some record that it was on this occasion that Odo of Rye took the Castle by stratagem.

Henry I also used the Castle as a Palace, finding Hastings a convenient haven for the passage from England to Normandy, and the fittest station for his Royal Yacht.

We cease to hear of the Mint in Stephen's reign.

It was from our Castle, in 1200, that King John issued his claim to the Sovereignty of the Seas, requiring all foreign vessels to strike their topsails to his flag.

The Counts of Eu held the Castle till the reign of Henry III, and it was their chief English residence; but they only occasionally lived here, as they had large Norman possessions. Tradition, moreover, says that while they were masters the Castle was burnt. This incident, if true, would be a strong inducement for them to abandon Hastings and settle down in their foreign chateau. When Philip conquered Normandy from John, they were placed in a difficult situation, being looked on with suspicion by either monarch. Eventually they had to choose between being English or French subjects; and electing to be vassals of the King of France, they became aliens in the eyes of the

English Sovereign: so, in 1221, the Castle lapsed to the Crown. The pay of the Keeper of the Castle under Henry III (1227) was 20 marks a year. In 1245 the fortress was granted to Peter, Count of Savoy, along with the Rape of Hastings, the revenues especially to be spent on the fortification of the Castle, which marks it even then to have been in a ruinous state unfitted for defence.

It was on this occasion that Hastings became connected with Richmond, for Peter had been made Earl of Richmond, though he did not use the title, and the Honour of Hastings was granted him in exchange for lands in Norfolk, belonging to the Honour of Richmond. A clause was frequently inserted in the creation of an Earl enabling his estates to become part of the Honour of the Earldom, though locally distinct from it, and in this way Hastings became part of the northern Earldom, so that the Dukes of Bretagne, and John of Gaunt, were Lords of Hastings, because they were also Earls of the County of Richmond in Yorkshire. The Honour of Richmond was held by Princes of the House of Bretagne from the Conquest until 1390; the only interruptions, each caused by war, being the grant to Peter of Savoy, and that to John of Gaunt.

The Count of Savoy does not seem to have been able to refortify the Castle, or else he spent the money in other ways. The only military record connected with the place after this date is, that some time before the battle of Lewes there was a skirmish

under the walls between the Royal and Baronial Forces.

In 1280 there is mention in an Inquisition that to the Honour of Hastings belong 57 Knights' Fees (with 2 in Essex), and they render annually for the Castle Guard £21 0s. 9d.* Before the four Knights' fees of Bexhill were restored to the See of Chichester, 60 Knights in the Honour of Hastings did homage to the Counts of Eu, of whom 15 had to keep watch and ward in the Castle every month. This personal service must have been excessively irksome, and as time went on, an annual payment to the superior Lord was substituted, to be spent by him in hiring soldiers. So long as the Suzerain lived in the Castle, this money would be spent in guarding the fortress; but when the Lord lived away, as did the later Counts of Eu, and their successors the Dukes of Bretagne, they would be more inclined to devote these payments to their own uses; and leave the Guard of the Castle unattended to. This is what actually happened, for in 1340, when the French not only took the town, but surprised the Castle, King Edward III ordered an enquiry as to the keeping of the Castle Guard; and it was found that the Dukes of Bretagne had regularly received the Castle Guard Rents since the time of Henry III, but had never applied them to the guarding of the Castle. This misapplication of the revenues probably went on till the reign of Richard II, when

* Suss. Arch. xxi, 119

the Duke of Bretagne being at war with England, the long connexion of that family with the Honour of Hastings was determined.

It will be seen that our Castle was a pre-eminently unlucky structure: it suffered from fire, it suffered from the sea, but more than all, it suffered from the utter neglect of its foreign masters for well nigh 300 years. No wonder then that so little remains. Perhaps there would not have been a single stone left to tell its site, if it had not been placed under the charge of the Canons of St. Mary, of whom we shall have to speak in the next Chapter.

The Honour of Hastings comprehended the entire Rape, with the exception of the Ports of Hastings, Winchelsea, and Rye, and omitting the Demesne of the Abbot of Battle, the Abbot of Fécamp's Manor of Brede, and the Bishop of Chichester's Manor of Bexhill. The Castle usually went with the Honour, but in times of emergency the Crown occasionally assumed a direct control. Prince Edward (Edward I) succeeded the Counts of Eu in the Honour; then Peter Count of Savoy. In 1269 the Honour was conferred on the Duke of Bretagne, and was held in succession by six Princes of that House, until a war breaking out between England and Bretagne, John of Gaunt received the grant. While Lord of Hastings he built a house adjoining Ore Church. Henry IV having succeeded to the Honour by inheritance, conferred it on the Earl of Westmoreland, from whom it passed to the Pelhams. Sir Thomas Hoo, descended

from the Counts of Eu, was made Lord Hastings by Henry VI. Sir Thomas dying without issue, Sir William Hastings, tenth in descent from Henry Count of Eu, the grandson of the 1st Governor, was made Lord Hastings, with the grant of the Honour and Castle. He was beheaded in the Tower, but his son had the Honour re-granted, and after him three Earls of Huntingdon, bearing the name of Hastings, held it in succession. In 1591 the Honour was purchased by Sir Thomas Pelham, and his descendant, the Earl of Chichester, is still Lord Paramount of the Manors, as the Counts of Eu were; and receives the Castle Guard Rents, both Castle and Barony being his.

After 1399 the Honour of Hastings was held distinct from the Earldom of Richmond.

CHAPTER VII.

THE COLLEGE OF ST. MARY.

THE Castle has an ecclesiastical as well as a military history. It was situated in the Parish of St. Andrew's, and affords another example (there are several in the town) of the absorption of the greater part of a parish by a religious brotherhood. The existing St. Andrew's Parish is very small, and the site of the ancient church and its churchyard are actually within the bounds of the present parish of St. Mary-in-the-Castle. The Castle was scarcely completed, when Robert Count of Eu, the first Governor, founded a College of Canons, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, which was ever after closely connected with the Castle. There have been great doubts as to the position of this College, but, as it suffered even more than the Castle from the sea, it must have been on the seaward side. Now, just below the Lady's Parlour, and at the back of the Coastguard Station, it has been already remarked that there is still such a site remaining—of course with sadly diminished area—of which one proof is that, within a few feet of the cliff edge, at the top of the hundred steps leading from George Street, is a deep well. Now a deep well would never have been sunk so near the termination of the cliff; moreover, the well must have been intended to supply water to people living on this ledge or terrace—for it could have been

of little service if the water of this well had to be dragged up every drop to the steep heights above. Hereabouts, then, I think it very probable that this College was. Soon after its erection it was known as the Monastery, and the Canons as Monks. They were not strictly, however, what we understand by the term Monk, but Secular Canons, who mixed, more or less, with the world, and ministered the offices of religion to the laity; they were so called because bound by canons, or laws derived from the Fathers, but differed, for instance, from the Austin Canons of Trinity, whom we shall meet with later, in that they did not profess the vows of obedience and poverty, and that they lived in separate residences, and not in common, like ordinary Monks. Their number was ten; a Dean was appointed at a later period to preside over them.

In 1090 the Courts of the Castle were thronged with the gathering of the warlike nobles of England, and the aisles of St. Mary echoed to the steps of the Prelates assembled from every diocese to do homage to their King. Again, in 1093, the Bishops, including Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, were summoned to give their benediction to the army, and during their stay Anselm, with the assistance of seven Bishops, consecrated the King's Chaplain Bishop of Lincoln. Here we come to a formidable difficulty, for we are told by Eadmer* that the consecration took place in the Church of St. Mary, the Mother of God, which is in the Castle itself, "*in ipso Castello*," and

* Br. Arch. Ass^{n} Jour., June 30, 1867, p. 127.

yet we shall hereafter find this chapel described as situated below the barrier or fortification, "*infra claustrum.*" I have fancied that I see a solution of this difficulty, if we suppose the lower terrace, which we have pointed out in the previous chapter as defended by a ditch on the east, to have been regarded in those early times as a part of the Castle, and that afterwards, as the Castle fell into decay, this lower and outer platform was neglected, and ceased to be considered part of the Castle. In this way, and in this way alone, can we account for the same building at one time being represented as in, and at another as outside the walls. It could have been no small or mean chapel that could have sufficed for the gorgeous ceremonial of the consecration of a Bishop, in the presence of the King of England and his Court. It is not unlikely that this ancient shrine resembled the beautiful Chapel in the White Tower of London, dedicated to St. John, with its massive pillars and round Norman arches, seeing that these two chapels were built at the same time, and for the same purpose, namely, to serve for worship in a Royal Fortress. A copy of the common seal of this community has been preserved, which shows two ecclesiastical structures of Norman architecture.

We have not the original deed of gift, but we have a deed of Henry Count of Eu, the grandson of the founder, undated, but probably in the reign of Henry I, or Stephen, in which he records his father's and his grandfather's benefactions. There was no Dean in

the original foundation; but this omission was probably remedied by Count Henry himself, as we find the deed witnessed by Hugh, the Dean, who was in all likelihood the first Dean, and certainly preceded in order of time Thomas-à-Becket, who has sometimes had the credit of being the first Dean.

From this Confirmation,* we extract such particulars as are of local interest: premising, however, that the Dean, whenever created, had a residence and lands, together with pensions from each of the Canons, and the advowson of St. Mary-in-the-Castle (which in time came to be regarded as a Parish Church), and occasionally, perhaps always, held one of the Prebends. He also seems to have had some direct connexion with Warbleton (afterwards connected with Holy Trinity) as one of the Deans is buried in Warbleton Church; and a farm in the parish is known as the Deanery Farm.

The first Canon was Prebendary of Wartling with the tithes of Hoo and Ninfield, and a house in the Castle. About 1220 this Canonry was separated into the three Prebends of Wartling, Hoo, and Ninfield.

The second Canon was Prebendary of Bexhill, with Beckley and the Chapel of St. Mary, Bulverhythe, the remains of which, in the Norman style, with early English additions, are still visible on the Bexhill Road, at the back of the Bull Inn. He was also entitled to 2,000 herrings, and had two houses, one *in* and one *beneath* the Castle. (Here we have, perhaps, an

* Rev. E. Turner on College of Hastings.—Suss. Arch. x.

indication that the Chapel and some adjoining buildings were beginning to be reckoned as beneath rather than as in the Fortress). He had land near the Monastery. Near what Monastery? It could not be the Priory of the Holy Trinity, as Mr. Turner supposes, misled as he was by his having taken the Henry Count of Eu, of the time of Henry II, as the author of the Confirmation, instead of his grandfather Henry, of the time of Henry I, though even then it would be antedating the foundation of the Priory, which there is strong reason to assign to the reign of Richard I. So the Monastery must have been the College of St. Mary itself; and in Domesday we find the Monks received £4 from Bulverhythe, seemingly shewing that the College under the name of Monastery was even then in existence. The first Count Henry, of Stephen's reign, was induced to express his regret at the conduct of his grandfather in taking Bexhill from the Bishop, and of his father in keeping it, and showed the sincerity of his regret by making a restitution of Bexhill to the episcopal authority. The Bishop had a residence in this village for several centuries, and it is a pity that such is no longer the case, so that our spiritual chief might be able occasionally to live at this end of his diocese, following in this the example of the holiest of his predecessors, Saint Richard, who resided in Bexhill during his episcopate, *i.e.*, from 1245 to 1253. In 1447, when we were losing France, and our coast was becoming exposed to invasion, leave was obtained by Bishop Moleyns, afterwards killed in the

Jack Cade troubles, to embattle the episcopal manor house, and enclose it with stone, and empark 2,000 acres of land. All vestiges of the park are gone, but the old episcopal palace yet remains; it is the farm-house for many years inhabited by Mr. Brooke, and more recently by Mr. Overy; its garden wall is almost opposite the Bell, and although its conversion to a modern dwelling-house has obliterated most of its antiquities, yet here and there an ancient window or archway is to be seen, and the walls, by their thickness, testify that they once formed part of no ordinary mansion. After the loss of Bexhill this Canon became known as Prebendary of Bulverhythe. A presentation is recorded in 1212.

The third Canon was Prebendary of Hailsham, and had Guestling, and a house in the Castle.

The fourth Canon had a meadow just beyond the mill below the Castle. The mill of course was a water-mill, windmills not having been introduced into Europe.

The fifth Canon was Prebendary of Salehurst, and had Salehurst, Mountfield, and Udimore, with land under the Castle, and a house in the Castle. These churches were, in 1249, transferred to the Abbey of St. Mary of Robertsbridge, which is in Salehurst Parish; and in 1365, the Abbot of Robertsbridge for the time being was appointed Canon and Brother.

The sixth Canon had one house in the Castle, and the supervision of the Grammar School; and thus, as the College existed from William the Conqueror to

Henry VIII, Hastings had the benefit of a Grammar School during those many centuries; and our present Grammar School is actually the revival of one lost at the Reformation.

The seventh Canon was Prebendary of Peasemarsh, and had Dallington, Iden, Rye, and Hamstreet. He superintended the singing school; so that the services in the College Chapel were performed by a trained choir.

The eighth Canon had two houses in the Castle. Why he should want two houses is not clear.

The ninth Canon was Prebendary of Hollington, and had Ewhurst (which may have derived its name from Eu) and Bodiam. Ewhurst was suppressed in 1480. He had one house in, and a garden out of the Castle, and at the time of the dissolution the advowson of Hastings, but which church is meant is not known. Almost the only church that it could be was St. Margaret's, and it is remarkable that the last presentation to it was by King John in 1204, and that the King presented the same incumbent to St. Andrew's the following year; and as St. Andrew's undoubtedly belonged to the College, may not St. Margaret's too?

The tenth Canon served the Church of St. Andrew, known sometimes as St. Andrew under the Castle. I suppose, when this church went to ruin through the encroachment of the sea, or through being burnt by the French, that the Chapel of St. Mary began to be used by the parishioners instead, and so gradually to be looked on as the Parish Church; and that part

of the parish situated within in the precincts of the Castle, which happened to be the major part, to be regarded as the parish of St. Mary. When the town was rebuilt in 1380, after having been several times laid waste by invasion, the name of St. Mary seems to have practically superseded that of St. Andrew. At the time of the dissolution there was a Canon of Brightling, and William of Wykeham is stated to have been Canon of Brightling, 1362, and perhaps built the chancel of that church, on each side of which are his arms, in conjunction with those of the College of Hastings.

Besides the above individual possessions and perquisites, the Canons held Etchingham in common, and were entitled to the tithe of the earnings of the boats of Winchelsea, which in itself must have been no inconsiderable revenue.

Some of the above Canons were Prebendaries of Crowhurst, Ticehurst, and Stone; other Prebends were West Thurrock, Tamworth, and Marlpas.

When Henry III resumed the Castle, owing to its hereditary Governor the Count of Eu siding with the French, he gave the site in 1236 to the Canons, reserving to himself the right of resuming possession if necessary for the defence of the realm. This necessity apparently occurred, for we have seen that in 1245, Peter, Count of Savoy, had the Honour of Hastings with the Castle annexed, on the express condition that he would fortify it out of the revenues. The Count of Savoy, however, found the Castle

cliffs too much broken down, and the Castle itself too much ruined by fire and decay; he was consequently unable to carry out the fortifications, so the Castle was finally abandoned as a place of defence, and in 1331 the Dean and Chapter of the King's Free Chapel had permission to enclose the Castle, and build houses for their dwellings within it; and they were also to have the King's herbage belonging to the Castle.

For want of inclosure the Chapel had been damaged by the sea, the relics, ornaments, and treasures had been stolen, and the ministers of the Chapel beaten, wounded, and insulted (it is startling to find these holy men treated in this way, but we shall see presently that they had a continual feud with the Bishop of Chichester and the Archbishop of Canterbury, and it may be that episcopal partisans shewed their zeal by this kind of persecution); they therefore petitioned for and acquired additional powers to enable them to repair the Castle walls, in order to secure their chapel against the overflowings of the sea. There is this point to be noticed here, that the Dean and Canons speak of their Chapel as "*Sita infra claustrum predictum: quod per frequentes inundationes maris pro majore parte devastatur*," *i.e.*, "Situated below the aforesaid fortress, which (fortress) owing to the frequent inundations of the sea is for the greater part devastated." Now in no conceivable way could the Chapel, if it had been situated where the present Chapel is, have been in the

slightest degree touched by the sea; this proves that the southern part of the Castle, which alone could be reached by the sea, was at a much lower elevation than the existing ruined part, and that the Dean and Canons can have been making no allusion to the present Chapel, which stands about 156 feet above the sea level, and on the landward and completely sheltered side of the Castle. We have thus a convincing proof that the ancient St. Mary's College Chapel was situated somewhere else, and that somewhere else was so placed that it suffered directly from the action of the sea; it must therefore have been on the opposite or seaward side, which exactly accords with the site already pointed out beneath the Lady's Parlour. [See Map of 1291.] The lower Chapel was at last reluctantly abandoned, together with such of the priests' houses as stood in the immediate vicinity. All along there must have been a Chapel up above for the use of the garrison, and there is certainly Norman herring-bone work in the staircase turret [K] adjoining; but on this occasion, the old upper Chapel was probably enlarged. The alteration may have been begun as early as their first possession in 1236, and the architecture of the existing structure favours that idea, but it was certainly completed about 1331, when additional residences were constructed, the whole being sufficiently enclosed to ward off marauders, and some attempts being made to keep the sea at bay.

In 1249 the emoluments of the third Canonry were

transferred to the Abbey of Robertsbridge, and this was confirmed afterwards by Richard II.

In 1279 one of the Canons was prevented by the Bishop from obtaining a house—apparently the house he was entitled to in the Castle—and prayed King Edward to order the Bailiff of Hastings to interfere, as he had not where to lay his head. The Chapel, it will be recollected, is always styled the King's Free Chapel of St. Mary, and the Canons therefore claimed to be independent of episcopal interference, and the Bishop as persistently endeavoured to force them to acknowledge the superiority of the See of Chichester. In 1299 the next Bishop conceded that the Chapel was a Royal Free Chapel, but that the Prebendaries were under him. The Lord Warden intervened, and the King and Parliament decided against the Bishop. In 1301 the Constable of the Castle was directed by Edward not to allow the Archbishop to enter the Castle walls; the Archbishop therefore gave up his intended visit. Next year the Archdeacon of Lewes was kept out of the Castle too—no doubt the object of each of these dignitaries being to interfere with the internal arrangements of the College. The King shewed his interest in the question by the appointment of his own Royal Chaplain to one of the Prebends. The Archbishop called this a contemptuous intrusion, and in 1305 the same Prelate, in his Metropolitan visitation of the Diocese of Chichester, proposed to excommunicate the Keeper of the Castle if he refused him admittance, and the Prebendaries

themselves if they did not submit when he was admitted, including Giles of Oudenarde the Dean. However, in spite of these ecclesiastical threats, he was not admitted. The Archbishop did not give up, and eventually, when the Governor of the Castle happened to be absent, the Archbishop's Commissary got in, turned out the old Dean, and appointed another. The King immediately ordered the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports to turn out the new Dean and reinstate the old one, which was done. In 1345 the Dean, John Wade, was committed to the Tower for contempt. This must have been for some offence against the Crown—perhaps he had yielded to the Bishop. The pertinacity of the Bishops, however, was at last rewarded with success, for in 1480 it was agreed that the Chapel should be considered to be under episcopal jurisdiction. At that time the Dean had one of the Prebends. After the dissolution of the Monasteries, the advowson of St. Mary-in-the-Castle was for a time in the hands of the Crown, and the rights of the free Chapel of St. Mary were conferred on Sir Anthony Browne; but in 1588, among other favours bestowed by Queen Elizabeth on our Corporation, was "the advowson of the Rectory and Church of the Blessed Mary in the Castle of Hastings, commonly called or known as the Castle Parish and St. Andrew's, or by the name of one of them." Perhaps this after all only means St. Andrew's, for in 1594 the Crown presented to the Rectory of St. Mary *prope castrum*—"near the Castle"—and in 1638 a descendant

of Sir Anthony Browne, Francis, Lord Montague, undoubtedly leased the rectory and advowson, and church impropriate of St. Mary's of the Castle of Hastings, with the vicarage of the same, to William Carr, Rector of St. Clement's, with the stipulation that it should only be for so long as Carr should remain parson of Hastings. This Carr was stated in 1658 to be one of the most active of the Cavalier party in Sussex. In 1721, Anthony, Lord Montague, conveyed all his rights in the Free Chapel to Sir Thomas Webster. The Websters, however, appear to have let their rights fall into abeyance, for the present owner is the Earl of Chichester, descended from the warlike Pelhams, who have long been connected with the town and neighbourhood. Their badge, the Buckle, is to be seen on many buildings and churches in the County.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Priory and the Hospital.

The new ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Trinity, which came into existence in 1882, includes the old St. Michael's Parish, and the demesne of the Priory of the Austin Canons of Holy Trinity. They belonged to the oldest order in Europe, older even than the Benedictines, but were not introduced into England till 1105, in the reign of Henry I. To a certain extent they adopted a monastic life, having a common dwelling and table, an abstemious diet, with denial of many comforts, and stated hours for prayers in their chapel. The Canons, however, were intermediate between the monks or *regular* clergy on the one hand, who lived, as their appellation implied, according to strict rule, and the secular clergy on the other, who had the cure of souls, and held private property, and were often married. Unlike the Benedictines, the Canons did not renounce private property, nor vow celibacy, and while the Monks adopted the tonsure, the Canons wore beards and caps upon their heads. In 1059 the Canons were divided into secular and regular, the former still appropriating the proceeds of benefices as individuals, and retaining the right to marry; the latter, and amongst these were our Hastings Canons, of Holy Trinity, devoting themselves to perpetual chastity and poverty, and following

as a pattern the strict rule of Augustine. They were called the Black Canons regular of St. Augustine; they were in fact the only Black Monks, the Benedictines being called the White Monks. They were brought into Hastings by Sir Walter Bricet about 1191, in the reign of Richard I. An old inhabitant of this parish, since gathered to his fathers, told me that in his younger days part of the ruin was still in existence, on the ground where Upper Cambridge Terrace is built now. In an old farmyard and barn that fronted my present house for many years, and which is now covered over by Cambridge Gardens, there were many relics of the Priory built into the barn walls; and near where Priory Street leads out of Cambridge Road, was an old pond, in which, at a depth of 30ft., enormous sluice-gates were met with. Here, then, was one entrance to the ancient haven, and here must have been the eastern limit of the Priory precincts. Its western limit was the line of cliff which we still see at the back of Claremont, and on which the houses in Cornwallis Gardens are built, looking down on Cambridge Gardens below them. Though its site was so low, yet, as Moss remarks, "at its foundation the Priory was without doubt so situated as to be thought to be out of all danger from the sea;" and we have thus an incidental proof that in Richard I's time there was land or defence of some kind existing which does not exist now.

This low and damp situation of Holy Trinity Priory was at one time a puzzle to me, for, pondering the

matter over, it seemed a curious thing that the Monks, whom we generally suppose to have been worldly wise in these matters, should not have gone a little higher up, and selected a situation less damp, and with a better view; but at length I came across some very similar observations which had occurred to another writer in speaking of another abbey, who, however, pointed out that the site was deliberately chosen—that dampness was preferred—for that St. Bernard, the author of that grand old hymn, "Jerusalem the Golden," whose knowledge of monastic rules was exceeded by no man of his century, declared in so many words: "Our Fathers searched out the damp and low-lying valleys wherein to build their monasteries, so that the monks being often in ill-health, and having death before their eyes, should not lead a careless life." In every monastery and nunnery the dormitory and other apartments of the monks and nuns are built on ground sloping *down* from their church or chapel towards the water, and the look-out from their bed-room or dormitory was their own grave-yard, usually on the eastern side of every conventual establishment. St. Bernard died only 38 years before Holy Trinity was founded: he was abbot of the Cistercian house of Clairvaux in 1116, at the age of 25; he was instrumental in establishing 160 monasteries, so he ought to be an authority on their construction. He probably established the Cistercian monastery of Boxley, in Kent, in 1130, which was mother to the Cistercian Abbey of St. Mary of

Robertsbridge in 1176, which thus preceded Trinity by 15 years.

In early times this demesne is never mentioned as a parish in itself; but as in the Parish of *St. Michael*, and since the ground selected for the Priory must have been part of some already existing parish, we cannot be wrong in assuming that parish to have been St. Michael's, and are thus enabled to add no less than 192 acres on to the dimensions of the present St. Michael's. The Canons of Trinity would naturally wish to acquire the advowson and presentation to the church of the parish in which they were settled; accordingly, one of the earliest deeds regarding the Priory is endorsed Michael de Hastings, by which a certain Robert gives to the Church and Canons of St. Trinity, Hastinges, his right of advowson and presentation in a certain portion of the Church of St. Michael, Hastings, the tenement occupied by Michael, the Dean, for his life being exempt; and Michael was Dean of the neighbouring College of St. Mary of the Castle in 1198, so that the acquisition is almost coeval with the foundation of the Priory. The deed is witnessed by Richard, Constable of Hastings, James Fitz-Alard of Winchelsea (*i.e.*, of the old Winchelsea buried beneath the waters, or as it is quaintly expressed in the old map, "Old Winchelsea Drowned.") The tombs of some of his descendants may be seen in the present Winchelsea Church. William Fitz-Robert, of Hastings (a great-grandson of the Robert of Hastings in Domesday, and brother or cousin of the Vincent

of Hastings who commanded the Royal Galleys, 1207-8), and William of Gensing.*

There is one parish of Hastings so utterly lost that we do not even know where to look for it, not only the church but the parish itself having got extinguished; but it is just possible that the same agencies which all but erased St. Michael's Parish from the Map also entirely erased St. Peter's. It may have been an island—islands were reckoned the peculiar property of that Saint. It was very likely a parish of fishermen, and the association of St. Peter with St. Andrew might suggest that they faced one another on opposite sides of the harbour mouth, which would identify St. Peter's with the submerged forest marked in the Map of 1291. Anyhow it is now wholly under water, but it was once under the jurisdiction of the Priory, for in 1240 the Kentish Priory of Combwell, near Ticehurst, devised all their interest in the advowson and Church of St. Peter to the Canons of Trinity.

It was not unusual for Monasteries to assume a parochial jurisdiction. The precincts of the Priory would soon be looked on as distinct from the rest of the Parish in which it was situated, and there was besides a motive for this *severance*. For the institution of Regulars—*i.e.*, priests bound to live by rule—brought about a serious contest all over Western Europe between them and the seculars, *i.e.*, the clergy in general. In the early centuries the clergy living in the midst of

* The earliest mention we have of Gensing.

their parishioners were often married men, and so had interests in the well-being of their wives, children, and connexions by marriage, and in the general welfare of their neighbours. They had little or no sympathy with the foreign Church of Rome; but the Regulars almost universally adopted the rule of celibacy; and the authorities at Rome soon perceived that these new corporations, bound by no ties of family affection, and dependent in great measure on Rome for their authority, would form obedient instruments, whereas the secular clergy frequently proved recalcitrant. There was in consequence a feud wherever a monastery was established between the parish priests and the monks; the one, priding themselves on their superior learning and on their unmarried state, looked down on the others as ignorant and sinful. The local clergy, on the contrary, regarded the conventual brethren as intruders and agents of the foreigner; and in later times, when the Convents acquired wealth, and became corrupt, the country parson was the keenest denouncer of their faults; and in many a village church may be traced commemorations of their quarrels, in gross but grotesque caricatures of monks wallowing in gluttony and depravity. At the head of the secular clergy were their Bishops, and the ecclesiastical annals of the middle ages are full of the attempts of the Bishops to exercise authority over the Abbeys and Priories in their dioceses. Their attempts were steadily resisted by the Orders themselves. Any such disputes, if there were any, respecting the Priory, have not been handed

down to us; but we had occasion to notice such contentions in regard to the College of St. Mary. From these and other causes the demesne of the Holy Trinity ultimately became extra-parochial. The possession of the advowson and presentation to the living of St. Michael enabled them to check effectually any claims set forth by the Rector, as they had only to present one of their own body when the living fell vacant. This idea of Trinity being only a part of St. Michael's is no new one. Fifty years ago the Rev. G. G. Stonestreet said, "I am of opinion that no such parish ever existed by episcopal authority as the Parish of the Holy Trinity." St. Michael's is named in 1291.

The Bishop of Chichester, in 1440, states that the parishes of St. Andrew's, St. Leonard's, St. Michael's, and St. Margaret's, had so suffered from the depredations of the sea in the last 100 years, that they had no longer any churches. Therefore, St. Michael's Church, according to the Bishop, was ruined somewhere between 1340 and 1440. But we can narrow these limits, for St. Michael's is mentioned as a Hastings church in 1356; was in ruins, and not rebuilt in 1380. This would agree with its having been destroyed by the French either in 1360 or 1377. Now, one of the peculiarities of the Austin Canons, who held 161 Priories in England, was that the naves of their chapels were also used as churches for their neighbours; and so, when the Parish Church was destroyed, the parishioners of St. Michael would undoubtedly begin to avail themselves of the Priory Chapel until its removal to

Warbleton about 1412. This use of the Priory Church for at least 30 years, or perhaps for 50 years, may have caused the Chapel of the Priory at length to be looked on as their Parish Church, and so have given rise to the recognition of some kind of Trinity Parish.

The Church and House becoming overflowed and laid waste by an inundation, Sir John Pelham gave lands at Warbleton, about 1412, on which to build a new Church and Monastery. The Royal letters-patent made on occasion of this grant recite to the following effect: "The Church of the Holy Trinity of Hastyng, and the dwelling of our beloved in Christ, the Prior and Convent of the aforesaid Church at Hastyng, have been inundated, and laid waste by the sea, so that they could no longer dwell there, as the said Prior and Convent have given us to understand, for which reason our beloved and faithful Knight, Sir John Pelham, by our license, hath given and granted to the same Prior and Convent certain lands and tenements in Warbilton, on which lands a new Church and dwelling in honour of the Holy Trinity hath been begun."

The strongest argument in favour of our modern Trinity Parish having been in reality a part, and a very large part of St. Michael's, is in the valuation of the rents taken under Henry VIII, at the time of the general dissolution of the Monasteries. The rents are given in full, as derived from tithes and lands in all the surrounding parishes, but I will confine myself to reciting the amount for the parishes which are usually

reckoned as in Hastings:—All Saints, £1 8s. 10d.; St. Clement's, £2 2s. 4d.; St. Michael's, the large sum of £8 2s. 2d.; and there is no mention of Trinity as a parish at all. We are not even left to guess at the value of the land, for, in a valuation made at nearly the same time of some of the Priory lands, occurs the statement: "Item of Chylthurst, in the paryshe of Hersemonsherst and Watling (Herstmonceux and Wartling), coteyning, by estimation, 80 acres, at 1s. the acre, £4." So that the unflooded lands in St. Michael's, at a shilling the acre, must have amounted then to about 162 acres, and as the sea has since receded, this agrees very accurately with the 192 acres of the present day. The main revenues, therefore, were drawn from St. Michael's; and this is no chance statement, but occurring in a minute valuation of all the property of the Priory, in which every parish is most carefully discriminated. As late as 1586, a messuage and land, part of the present Brisco property at Bohemia, is described as being in the Priory of St. Michael's, in Hastings.

In 1538, at the dissolution of Monasteries, the Priory lands were bestowed on the Attorney-General, John Baker. In process of time, they passed into the hands of the Earl of Cornwallis and Mr. Milward, the Earl holding three-fourths, now known as Cornwallis Park and Gardens, and Mr. Milward one-fourth. This latter portion "was given by the will of Richard Ellsworth, dated the 11th July, 1714, for the teaching the poorest children of that parish (I suppose whatwe

call Trinity Parish is meant) to read and say their catechism, and buying them books."* Chancery proceedings were adopted to carry this into effect, but appear to have been abandoned about 1818, owing to want of funds. The lands now form part of the Sayer's Estate.

We have seen how nearly the old designations of St. Andrew's and St. Michael's have been respectively superseded by the more modern St. Mary and Holy Trinity. We have yet a third instance in which the old name has been entirely superseded by the new. It is the Parish of St. Margaret, which has for centuries ceased to be recognised under that appellation. Yet we know its boundaries, and I think can point out the site of its old church; but we call it now St. Mary Magdalene, and it has been so known for at least 200 years. We have seen it associated with St. Michael's as a parish in 1291; and we have a deed, still existing I am happy to say, dated the following year—the oldest, I believe, in our archives—in which especial mention is made of the Parish of St. Margaret of Hastings. As this deed concerns a benefaction made to the Hospital of St. Mary Magdalene—a charity which has lasted to the present time, a charity which has done great good, and is likely to do still more—I propose to say what is known about the foundation, and then to give the deed at length.

The story goes that some Frenchman, who had been rescued at sea by Hastings Fishermen, or who had

* Horsfield's Sussex, i, 452 n.

benefited by them in some way, in token of his gratitude founded this Hospital, dedicating it to the Magdalene. When this took place we do not know; all that is certain is that it was long before the above deed of 1292. He evidently intended it for the benefit of the town at large. Both the Hospital and the lands with which it was endowed were situated in the Parish of St. Margaret; and it may be that a very large part of this Parish was comprised within the bounds of the Charity lands; and there is reason to believe that as early as 1291 the Parish Church was in decay. The parishioners would gladly make use of the Chapel of the Hospital, if permitted to do so. In this way the name of St. Margaret would gradually die out, and the name of St. Mary Magdalene take its place. The purport of the venerable deed, nearly 600 years old, is as follows:—

"Let men present and future know that I, Petronilla De Cham of Hasting in pure and lawful power of my widowhood, have given, granted, and by my present deed have confirmed to the Brothers and Sisters of the Hospital of Saint Mary Magdalene 5 acres of my land lying in the Parish of Saint Margaret of Hasting adjoining the land of William of Walderns and of the aforesaid Brothers and Sisters on the Eastern Part, and adjoining Gilbert's of Genesing on the Western Part, and adjoining my own land on the Southern Part, and adjoining the land of the aforesaid Brothers and Sisters on the North Part in pure and perpetual alms for the salvation of my own Soul and of the Souls of Godard,

Matilda, Robert, William, Richard and Henry, and for the souls of my heirs and remaining relations and friends, the aforesaid 5 acres of land with the precincts to be had and to be held by the aforesaid Brothers and Sisters freely, quietly, well and peacefully for ever. And I Lady Petronilla and my heirs will warrant and defend the aforesaid 5 acres of land with precincts to the aforesaid Brothers and Sisters and their successors against all people for ever. And the said Brothers and Sisters of the said Hospital have granted for themselves and all their successors that I Lady Petronilla and all and single, separately and generally, all the aforenamed shall be participators in the masses, vigils, prayers and all other good things which they have done and are going to do in the said Hospital for ever. And that this my gift, grant, guarantee and defence may obtain the strength of perpetual confirmation, I have strengthened this present deed with the impression of my own seal; and for the causing the greater faith in the promises all and single, hereinafter I have procured to be affixed to this deed the seal of the King's Commonalty of the illustrious Barony of Hastings, in full Hundred of Hasting held on Sunday on the feast of Saint Benedict the Abbot in the twenty-second year of the reign of King Edward son of King Henry. With these as witnesses, William of Waldern, Bailiff of Hasting, Henry the Meleward, and many others."*

* The name of Henry the Meleward has a familiar sound; from that time to this the Milwards have played an important part in Hastings history. Generation after generation have ruled

Pope Nicholas' Taxation gives the parishes that composed Hastings when this Charity was founded. They were: St. Leonard's, St. Margaret's, St. Michael's, St. Peter's of Hastings, St. Andrew's, St. Clement's, and All Saints. So that the Commonalty of that time, to whom the benefits of this institution were to be extended, inhabited an area corresponding precisely to modern Hastings and St. Leonards.

The Hospital was an Almshouse for old men and old women of the Port of Hastings who had seen better days, and in accordance with the religious observances of those times it partook of the nature of an ecclesiastical corporation as well. The Brothers and Sisters were continually offering their prayers for the souls of Benefactors and Benefactresses in their Chapel; and for centuries the Bailiff and the Commonalty nominated townsmen and townswomen for every Parish in the Borough.†

The Chapel Farm, at the junction of the Bohemia and De Cham Roads, marks the ancient site. A portion of the ruins were standing in 1820.‡

On their removal the centre of the Chapel was discovered to be full of bones without coffins; and recently, in digging the foundations of houses at the

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the town as Mayors, or represented it as Barons of Parliament; and it is to be hoped that their descendants will see their way to leaving to the town the enjoyment of the beautiful hills which form a portion of their large estate.

† See chap. xi, Custumal, sect. 47.

‡ There is a drawing of the ruins in Suss. Arch., xiv, 67.

angle of De Cham Road, many more bones have been met with. No doubt this was the Hospital Cemetery. The last mention of St. Margaret as a parish is perhaps by Bishop Praty, in 1440. The first occasion on which we meet with the modern designation of the parish is in an ordinance bearing date 1656, in which the out-parishes lying within the liberty of Hastings—namely, St. Mary-in-the-Castle, Trinity, St. Mary Magdalene, and St. Michael's—were directed to contribute to the poor of St. Clement's, inasmuch as the inhabitants had of long continuance repaired to St. Clement's Church, and had married, baptized, and been buried there.

At the Reformation the administration of the Hospital, apparently owing to its semi-religious character, appears to have passed into the hands of the Crown; but the lands and management were restored to the Corporation in 1588. In 1604 the Hospital was disused as such, and the revenues were distributed as doles to the deserving poor. The Corporation entrusted this distribution to the Churchwardens of St. Clement's and All Saints', simply because those were the only existing Churches; and because, as we have seen above, all the inhabitants of the Borough had to be christened, married, and buried there. There was no intention that the doles should be confined to the residents in St. Clement's and All Saints' Parishes only, but from the fact of there being very few people living outside those bounds—*e.g.*, ten persons in the Priory, and but one

family in St. Michael's—the recipients of the Charity became practically the parishioners of St. Clement's and All Saints alone. At what time the Churchwardens began actually to exclude other parishioners is unknown.

The land is 55 acres in extent, and is situated principally in the Gensing Valley, north of Warrior Square. The estate is now very valuable, and the revenues are yearly increasing; they are devoted to the poor of the above two parishes, with the exception of £6,000 set apart for the building of the Grammar School.

CHAPTER IX.

MEDIÆVAL HASTINGS.

THE Old Burg had reached the zenith of prosperity under Edward the Confessor, when it furnished 21 ships to the Royal Navy, and ranked as chief of the Cinque Ports; but it immediately suffered declension. If the conflagration in the Bayeux Tapestry be taken to mean that the Town was burnt by William's troops, its sudden decay at this particular juncture is fully accounted for, while the New Burg, a possession of the Norman Abbot of Fécamp, might at the same time have escaped unscathed—more especially as Remigius, Almoner of that Abbey, was William's principal adviser. The Port no doubt revived under the influence of the repeated visits of the Conqueror's sons, King William and King Henry, and benefited from the Mint which continued in their days; while the residence of the Canons of St. Mary must have also tended to its advantage, and the embarkation of the armies would enrich the Town in many ways. The opportunities afforded of catering to the wants of the soldiers—the employment of the Port vessels in conveying armaments (for the King had the free use of them for 15 days only, after that the crews had to be paid and fed), the lucrative occupation of supplying

fish to the forces campaigning on the opposite coast : all these sources contributed to the welfare of the town. The decadence may have recommenced in the troubled times of Stephen, as we find no mention of the Mint after his predecessor's reign.

In Stephen's reign Archbishop Theobald made Thomas-à-Becket Dean of the College of St. Mary. A William de Hastings, Steward to the Count of Eu, accompanied Richard I as a Crusader to the Siege of Acre; and in the same reign —in 1191—the Trinity Priory was founded, a large portion of the land connected with the old town being placed under the jurisdiction of the Prior. This appropriation of land to ecclesiastical purposes may have arisen from the haven having become useless for purposes of navigation, and with the view of the monastic brotherhood undertaking the repair of the sea-wall, a course actually adopted in the case of the Castle 45 years afterwards. At any rate, in nine years from this date, Hastings was only able to furnish six ships, and in the first year of King John, Winchelsea and Rye were added, under the style of Ancient Towns, to the Cinque Ports, to enable Hastings to furnish her quota of 21 ships, by themselves equipping 15. In 1215 John sent officers to take the custody of the Castle of Hastings, and the Barons of Hastings were to give them all the aid in their power. From about 1207 to 1217 Vincent of Hastings commanded the Royal Galleys, and Hastings and the other Ports

remained true to King John throughout his troubles, though the Barons of England in sheer despair invited over Louis, Crown Prince of France, to help them in their struggle against the tyrant. The sudden death of John, some arbitrary conduct on the part of Louis, and the natural longing for a native prince, all tended to bring about a revulsion of feeling in favour of the boyish King Henry and against the foreigner. The Portsmen zealously espoused the cause of their youthful sovereign. Their faithful adherence was soon put to the test; a force of 300 French knights, with a great body of soldiers, embarked at Calais in 80 great ships and many smaller ones, commanded by Eustace the Monk, who "had done in his day much mischief to Englishmen."* With only 40 vessels of the Cinque Ports, great and small, the English Warden, Hubert de Burgh, put to sea on St. Bartholomew's day, and encountered them, and "by tilting at them with the iron beaks of their galleys sunk several of the transports with all on board."† Louis was so disheartened by this reverse, that he was glad to make peace, gave up such strongholds as were in his possession, and returned to France.

A remarkable instance occurred some fifteen years afterwards of the feeling with which the people regarded this naval victory.‡ Hubert, who had been

* Southey's Naval Battles, i, 190.

† Charnock, i, 332.

‡ Shakespeare's magic wand has transformed Hubert, Earl of Kent, a man of almost princely rank and birth, into a common

Regent of England, and was husband of a Queen, fell upon evil days, and was forcibly dragged from the sanctuary where he had taken refuge. The smith who was sent for to rivet his fetters, on learning who he was, said, "I will never make iron shackles for him, but will rather die the worst death that is. Is not this Hubert, who restored England to England?"§

I have dwelt somewhat at length on this incident, because I believe that Hastings had no slight share in this great deliverance of our native land, and I am led to this conclusion by an examination of the Arms and Seal of our Town.

The Arms are peculiar; they may be described as on a shield, "per pale dexter *gules*, three demi-lions passant gardant *or*; sinister *azure*, three demi-ships *argent*;" or, in popular language, as consisting of three golden lions on a field of red, whose hinder parts are replaced by the sterns of three silver ships in a blue sea. These were the Arms of Hastings till the year of the Armada, and still are those of the Cinque Ports; the Arms of Hastings being now distinguished from those of the other Ports by having a whole lion in the centre, making them nearer to the Royal Arms; a distinction granted for some achievement in the reign of Elizabeth. Ships constitute such an appropriate emblem of a port, that

menial: "Out, dunghill, darest thou brave a nobleman!" are the terms in which he is addressed by Lord Bigod in "King John iv, 3."

§ Speed, p. 517.

there is little doubt the original Arms consisted of five undivided ships. It will be recollected that under the figure of Harold in the Bayeux Tapestry appear five ships, which seemingly point to the Cinque Ports, of which Harold was one of the earliest Wardens. The framers of the Tapestry would have every reason to be familiar with the cognizance of the Ports, because the very first act of King William I, after his coronation, was to make his Brother Lord Warden; therefore, as Harold's immediate successor, the Bishop of Bayeux would be entitled to bear this identical device. But while one half of our Arms still consists of ships, the remaining portion of the escutcheon represents one half of the ancient Arms of England, as they were borne from the time of Richard I, who first assumed the three lions, till that of Edward III, who quartered the lions with the lilies of France. Whenever this important augmentation was made, the five ships would have to be reduced to three, to make them correspond with the three lions of England. This addition to our Arms could not have taken place earlier than 1189, the beginning of Richard's reign, nor later than 1340, when Edward saw fit to assume the Arms of France, and we are entitled to assume that such an honour as that of bearing the Royal Arms "by dimidiation" could only have been bestowed for some very valiant exploit, and one that must have partaken of a national character, and benefited the whole kingdom. Now it happens that the battle just described, in which the

Cinque Ports are so specially mentioned, and which was won against such odds, was the only one fought at sea, for the protection of England's shores, in all that period of 150 years; for the battle of Sluys or Damme,* three years before, was simply a surprise of the French Fleet, the greater part of which was captured without resistance in a harbour in which there was no room for manœuvring, and the fighting principally took place on land; and although the Cinque Ports were engaged in it, and we may be sure did their devoir, yet they only formed a small part of the Earl of Salisbury's Fleet, which amounted to 500 vessels.

If we turn to the Seal of Hastings, we shall be able to narrow the limits within which the distinction was granted, to a period corresponding to the early part of the reign of Henry III, and shall find all the accessories in harmony with the view that Hastings gained her honours under De Burgh. We see in the Seals of all the Ports figures of ships of war; but on our own Seal we have an unique picture of a naval engagement—one ship ramming another, and cutting her in two, "tilting at her with her iron beak," the very manœuvre recorded in the description of the fight. The English ship has the Standard of Hastings at the prow, and the Royal Standard of the three lions at the stern, shewing that the Seal itself must have been executed prior to 1340. Both ships are

* Damme is now at least six miles inland from the sea.

exactly alike, and are of a style intermediate to the Conquest and the Edwardian era.* They have towers in the stern, which those in the Bayeux Tapestry have not, but they have no forecastles such as we see depicted in those of Edward III's reign. Moreover, the legend, "*Sigillum Commune Baronum De Hastinggis*," is in Gothic characters of the 13th century; and on the reverse side of the Seal the figure of St. Michael holds a circular shield, such as was sometimes used during the reign of Henry III. There seems, then, strong reason for believing that, in the very beginning of King Henry's reign, the men of Hastings so effectually contributed to the safety of England by their prowess in this her time of greatest need, that they acquired these Arms as a lasting memento of their achievement. If she, with Winchelsea and Rye, sent a full quota, her aid must have been indeed invaluable, and she may well claim to have borne the brunt of the fray, for more than half the English Fleet must have sailed under her flag.

Yet she continued to decline, and the reason is not far to seek. So long as Normandy and England were under one Crown, Hastings could not fail to be frequented by the many, whose duty or business required them to be passing backwards and forwards between the two countries, but when, in John's reign, the complete disruption of all former ties occurred,

* Mr. Ross considered them to be of the time of King John. uss. Arch., xxiii, 194.

there must have been at once a wonderful diminution, if not an entire cessation of the intercourse hitherto kept up. The proof of the decline is that, in 1229, Seaford and Pevensey had to be incorporated as limbs of Hastings, to assist her in supplying even her diminished number of six ships. Bulverhythe, Hydney near Willingdon between Eastbourne and Pevensey, Higham near Winchelsea, Beaksbourne near Canterbury 48 miles from Hastings, and Northey* near Pevensey Sluice, were added at the same time, but not incorporated. The respective quotas were as follows:—Hastings 3, Winchelsea 10, Rye 5, Seaford and Pevensey together 1, Bulverhythe and Higham 1, and Hidney, Grange near Maidstone 50 miles from Hastings, and Beakesbourne 1, making up the 21 that Hastings was originally bound to contribute. The sea, washing right up against the West Hill, was committing great depredations and so had to do with this decline, for St. Clement's, on the verge of that Hill, was destroyed by the sea in 1236, and in 1245 the Castle had suffered so much that it required all the revenues of the Rape of Hastings to put it in a state of defence.

Our Town, with the other Cinque Ports, sided heartily with De Montfort in his struggle against Henry III, and did such good service under his banner in defence of the liberties of the kingdom,

* Northey ceased to be a limb before the time of the Commonwealth.

that the Barons of Hastings, after the disastrous defeat at Evesham, found it necessary to excuse themselves in the following quaint terms: "Take notice, that we have up to this time guarded your town of Hastings for your use, and that of your heirs, and at your good pleasure shall guard it for ever, although anything to the contrary may have been suggested to your pious ears by our enemies against us." The Barons of Hastings had also had a little private war on their own account with Yarmouth in 1264; and very reluctantly concluded a truce for half a year at the bidding of the King's Council: in fact, the sea at this time was a scene of continual fighting, even when the nations were supposed to be at peace. There were continual battles between French and English ships; the Normans and the Cinque Ports were in particular vindictive against one another, not unfrequently hanging a captured crew. At length, in 1293, without any interference on the part of the Sovereigns, the Cinque Ports challenged their opponents to a kind of great naval tournament. An empty ship marked the point of contest. One hundred ships of the Cinque Ports fought double that number of Norman vessels, and after a bloody engagement took or destroyed the whole hostile fleet; so for long the French had neither ships nor men. On several occasions in the previous reign, the Ports had doubled the number they were bound to supply; but the cautious Portsmen protested that it was not to be regarded as a

precedent. In 1294 Hastings sent three ships—La Bayade with 40 men, La Rosette with 38, and the St. Anne with 28—as part of an expedition to recover Guienne, which Philip, King of France, had contrived by stratagem to wrest from our Edward I. Richard Mileward (likely enough a great grandson of Henry the Meleward, who figured as witness in Petronilla's grant) was Constable of the St. Anne. They served 73 days, 58 days beyond the customary time, and petitioned for payment—6d. for each Master and Constable, and 3d. for each man. In 1296 the Portsmen took advantage of King Edward I having gone to Flanders to help the Count against the French, to fight out their old feud with the men of Yarmouth; and they burnt 25 ships and killed 171 men.

In 1272 we have a singular instance of the lawless nature of the times on land as well as at sea. Sir Matthew de Hastings (a Knight who had been in the rebellion against the King, and whose estates at Netherfield were assigned in consequence to De Clare, Earl of Gloucester, the Lord of Tunbridge Castle, but who seems afterwards to have managed to make his peace with the King, as he was* Sheriff of

* Probably descended from the Domesday Robert de Hastings, who held half a knight's fee from the Abbot of Fécamp; and certainly from the later Robert de Hastings, who held half a knight's fee from the Count of Eu, 1153-8; and of the same family as the Crusader, William de Hastings, and the Royal Admiral, Vincent de Hastings.

Sussex and Surrey from 1270 to 1273), while proceeding through Sussex was met by the Master of the Foresters of Waldron, and the Master of the Foresters of another place, who arrested the progress of himself and men, and carried off their arms. This seems to have been an intentional and preparatory step, for further on the Foresters of the Earl de Warenne forced from his custody Amicia, wife of William Hocote, and carried her away with the Sheriff's horse. Here the curtain drops over what may have been a very pretty romance, and we are left entirely in the dark as to the motives of the various actors, and as to the sequel of the story.

In 1276 Edward I confirmed the Charter of the Cinque Ports, especially alleging that he does so "for the faithful service which our Barons of the Cinque Ports have hitherto rendered to our predecessors, and to us lately in our army of Wales;" when Llewellyn having refused to do homage at the coronation, was attacked and for a time subdued. The service alluded to was done by shipping.

We hear more of the New Burg in 1286, the old church having been broken and destroyed by the force of the sea 50 years before, as we learn from an inquisition of Edward I, 1236. Alan de Chesmongre and Alicia his wife, gave a rood of land to the Abbot of Fécamp to construct the Church of St. Clement *de novo*. They took the precaution of placing it much further from the shore than the old structure. In 1287 Edward I demanded amongst others matters

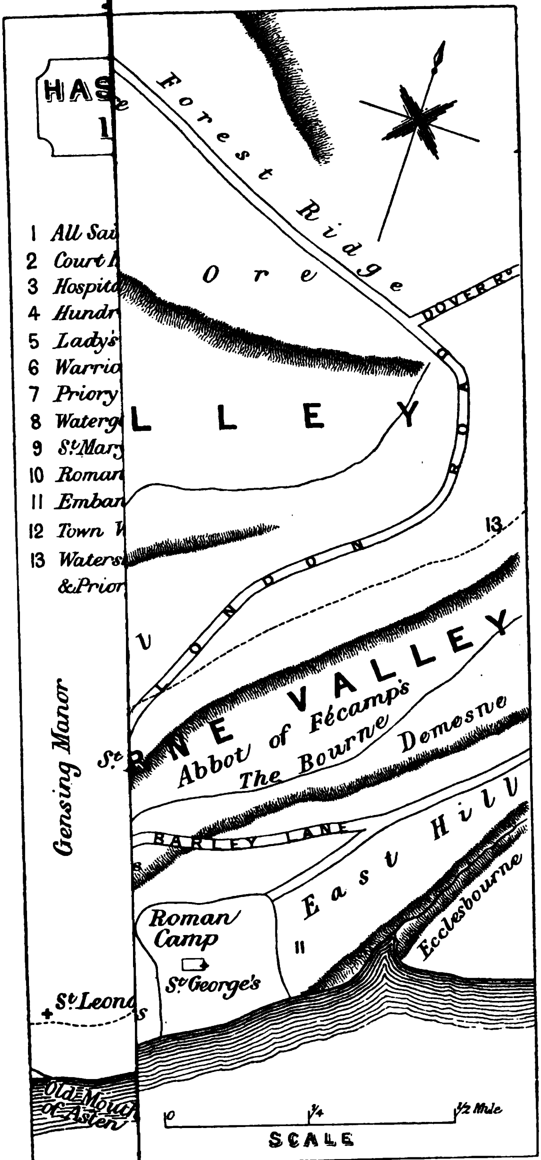
What right the Abbot had to build a prison? The Abbot modestly replied that he had only erected a house of detention for the safe custody of thieves. This adjoined the Courthouse (the last relic of which was pulled down in 1702); a Gaol* has been on the same ground ever since.

The Taxation of England and Wales authorised in 1291 by Pope Nicholas IV, a kind of Papal Domesday Book giving an inventory of all churches and religious houses and their revenues, affords us some valuable information as to the ecclesiastical status of our ancient Town and Rape. Confining ourselves to the Diocese of Chichester, the revenues of the Abbey of Fécamp were £201 14s. 11½d., of the Abbey of Battle £200 7s., of the Priory of Lewes £183 3s. 8d., and of the Abbey of Robertsbridge £80 13s. 4d. The following is very nearly an exact transcript of the passage relating to Hastings :—

	£	s.	d.
Church of St. Leonard	4	13	4
Church of St. Margaret, St. Michael, and Peter of Hastings	10	0	0
Church of St. Andrew-under-the-Castle	4	13	4
Church of St. Clement	5	0	0
Church of All Saints	5	6	8

And further on there is mention of the Priory of the Holy Trinity of Hastings.

* Recently converted into a Police Station.



Forest Ridge
Ore
DOVER Rd
LONDON ROAD
LLEY
1 All Sai
2 Court
3 Hospit
4 Hundr
5 Lady's
6 Warrio
7 Priory
8 Waterg
9 St. Mar
10 Roman
11 Emban
12 Town
13 Waters
&Prior
13
VALLEY
Abbot of Fécamp's
The Bourne
Demesne
Gensing Manor
BARLEY LANE
East Hill
Ecclesbourne
Roman Camp
St. George's
11
St. Leon
Old Mouth of Asten
0
1/4
1/2 Mile
SCALE

Here it may be noticed that if we were now going to describe the Parishes in their order from West to East, we should enumerate them precisely as they appear above—St. Leonard, St. Margaret now St. Mary Magdalen, St. Michael, [St. Peter], St. Andrew-under-the-Castle, St. Clement, and All Saints. The correspondence in arrangement is more than accidental, and we may therefore safely assume that the above was the order in which the Parishes actually occurred in the time of Pope Nicholas. This is so far important that it enables us with some degree of certainty to decide that the lost Parish of St. Peter adjoined both St. Michael and St. Andrew, and must therefore have been at the harbour mouth, as conjectured in the previous Chapter. St. Peter and St. Andrew would be Saints peculiarly appropriate to the fishermen's quarter.

It may also be noticed that only one church is mentioned for the three Parishes of St. Margaret, St. Michael, and St. Peter; and there is no record of St. Margaret's later than 1204, nor of St. Peter's after 1240, whereas St. Michael's was existing in 1356. It follows that St. Michael's must have been used by all the three parishes, which would be the more likely, as it was so centrally situated with regard to them; and if this was the case, St. Peter's Parish must have been on the St. Michael's side of the haven. Moreover, these parishes alone are described as *of Hastings*. We might deduce from this that these Parishes of St. Margaret, St. Michael, and St. Peter,

actually constituted the Old Burg of Hastings. Their united contribution was considerable, and with that of St. Andrew's, made up £14 13s. 4d. for the Priory Valley; while the returns of St. Clement's and All Saints gave only £10 6s. 8d. for the Valley of the Bourne.

In 1291 and in 1294 Hastings sent her three ships to the wars; but she had only one ship in the fleet which accompanied Edward I on his last inroad into Scotland.

It may be that the Parish of St. Peter was destroyed in 1325, when the embankments near Hastings burst, and the inundations so brought about may well be those referred to by the Dean and Canons of St. Mary's seven years afterwards, when they state that the greater part of the Castle "is devastated by frequent inundations of the sea."

More than a century afterwards, in 1440, we meet with a reference to this disaster, for in the Bishop of Chichester's Register of the date of 1440, already quoted, we read that within a hundred years, St. Andrew's, St. Leonard's, St. Michael's, and St. Margaret's had been depopulated and diminished by the inundation of the sea. We gather from this retrospect of Bishop Praty that previous to these calamities, the Port was in a flourishing condition. The broken dykes would require to be speedily repaired, or the proverbial danger of the letting in of waters would be incurred; but just at this crisis a worse enemy came to the fore, destroying such of the sea defences as the

sea itself had left untouched, and preventing the distracted townsmen from attending to the reconstruction of these all-important barriers.

For in 1339 the Town suffered for the first time since the Conquest from a foreign army. The Frenchmen "sore troubled this realm by sea, and landed at Hastings on the Feast of Corpus Christi, and there burnt some houses and slew some people."* The war of the hundred years had begun. In 1340 the Cinque Ports, commanded by the King in person, destroyed an immense French Fleet at Sluys, which had already been the scene of a similar disaster in 1214. The French Courtiers were afraid to inform King Philip of this overthrow; and they deputed his Jester to perform the unpleasing duty, who told the King that he thought the French sailors much braver than the English; and on being asked why, replied, because they leaped out of their ships into the water, and that the English did not attempt to imitate them.†

Hastings assisted at the Siege of Calais with 5 ships and 99 men. The acquisition of Calais, however, was fraught with injury to our Town, as it tended to make Dover exclusively the channel of intercourse with the Continent. The Ports vanquished the Spaniards off Winchelsea in 1350, King Edward and

* Southey's Naval Hist. Eng. i, 237.

† It has been shown that the Seal of our Town cannot be considered later than John or Henry III; otherwise it is remarkable that on the Seal one of the French crew is depicted as having jumped off his sinking ship into the sea.

his sons sharing in the engagement. Queen Philippa and her ladies were awaiting the result with anxiety in a mansion some six miles off, which corresponds very exactly with the ancient Manor House of Brede, the residence of the Oxenbridges, who held high position in the Port's Fleet. The Custumal of Hastings, (*i.e.*, the code of ancient laws and local customs by which it was governed) was revised, in the form in which it has come down to us, in 1356.* At length the tide of naval success began to turn against England. In 1360 the French landed at Rye and Hastings, and sacked the Towns; many of the people were slain, and much harm was done to the fishermen. In 1371 the Parliament took notice of the decay of the Navy, as well they might, for next year the whole Fleet of the Ports, with the Earl of Pembroke and a gallant army on board, was captured by the Spaniards,† and in the following reign John of Gaunt, at the head of a formidable expedition, had to linger for months at the mouth of the Severn, awaiting the arrival of a Portuguese Fleet to convey him to the coasts of Spain, and guard him from the Spaniards. This inefficiency of the English ships may be attributed to the superior size of the Spanish and Portuguese vessels, built to encounter the storms of the Atlantic. In 1378 the French came with a Fleet of 50 ships to attack Winchelsea, which was saved by the timely

* See Chap xi.

† This year, 1372, St. Mary of Bulverhythe was returned as a place of worship by the Bailiff of Hastings.

march of the Abbot of Battle to the rescue. After their repulse at Winchelsea they came to Hastings, which they found almost deserted. Perhaps the men of Hastings had gone with the martial Abbot to the relief of Winchelsea. Anyhow, there were not enough men left to defend it, and it was burnt once more. In 1380, ere the town could well have been rebuilt, (only we must recollect that the majority of the houses were as easily run up, and as unsubstantial as the quaint wooden storehouses of the fishermen on our beach) Hastings was burnt again, for the third time in 40 years. It is probable that up to 1325 Hastings had been artificially defended by vast moles or dykes, planned for the double duty of guarding against the violence of the waves and the approaches of an armed foe, and that these having been irretrievably damaged by the storm of 1325, the townsmen became an easy prey to foreign enemies, whenever they chose to make an attack; and the sea, being once allowed to force its way through the breaches in the ramparts, would, in an inconceivably short time, complete their ruin; indeed, its power would be incredible to any one who has not actually witnessed its effect, with which we on the coast are only too familiar. Witness the present state of the Fishermen's stade (1883).*

* On one occasion a great storm washed away the road over the White Rock, communicating between Hastings and St. Leonards, when the carriage of our Queen, then Princess Victoria, was dragged by the enthusiastic townsmen over Cuckoo Hill.

CHAPTER X.

New Hastings.

It was useless to rebuild the burnt town on a site which had become uninhabitable; so many of the inhabitants of St. Michael migrated into the "New Burg," hitherto a small suburb on the Bourne, but which thus became the nucleus of a New Hastings, endowed with all the privileges of the ancient Port, just as New Romney succeeded Old Romney.

Such churches as had escaped the ravages of the Ocean succumbed to the ruthless havoc of the French marauders. Scarcely a stone is left to tell of the shrines consecrated to St. Leonard, St. Margaret, St. Michael, St. Peter, St. Andrew, and St. George.

A Wesleyan Chapel in the Norman Road stands in the ancient graveyard of St. Leonard's Church. Another graveyard, encircling ruins which have vanished within living memory, suggests that St. Margaret's Church was once a conspicuous object on the cliff-edge, where it rises highest midway between the Priory and the Gensing Valley.* We have endeavoured to point out the possible position of St. Peter's Parish, but of St. Peter's Church we absolutely

* The late Mr. Deudney informed me that he recollected the ruins, and that they were exactly in the rear of 50, Eversfield Place. This and other churches are marked in the Map of 1291.

know nothing. The ruins of St. Michael's were removed in 1834 to make way for the Coastguard Station on Cuckoo Hill, and about the same time there were some slight indications of St. Andrew's just to the north of Wellington Square. Adjoining Castle Cross Cottage, in a Court leading from Castle Place, a small part of the churchyard may yet be discerned, situated within the modern St. Mary's Parish, and a few yards outside the boundary of the present St. Andrew's, which seems to be confined to the dried-up bed of the old haven. In the old Ordnance Map a small enclosure in the middle of the East Hill was erroneously marked as a camp. It is no such thing. The Roman Camp occupied a much larger portion of the hill, as we have already had occasion to mention in Chapter II.

The enclosure is far too small for a camp; it is, in fact, the churchyard of the ancient and forgotten Church once dedicated to St. George, the whole Hill having been known as St. George's, and the right of way to the Hill being due to its having been the high road to the Church.* As late as 1579 we read that Thomas Lam had one messuage called St. George's, and lands and tenements, amounting to 60 acres, called St. George's Hill, in the Port of Hastings, worth £20 a year. Mr. Rainolds, the Town Clerk, paid 9 shillings a year for St. George's Hill in 1656. The enclosure now used as a garden is attached to

* This right of way should be religiously preserved.

the living of All Saints, and on its southern side a few stones and a portion of the wall still commemorate the precise site of the church. Near the extreme western point of the East Hill once stood an ancient round Tower or Pharos. When that fell into decay the Tower of St. George's would form an admirable sea-mark for mariners making for Hastings Harbour. It is certain that St. Clement's and All Saints met with no better fate, for they are both perpendicular, of a plain, and therefore early character, and consequently, must have been rebuilt subsequently to 1360, before which no specimens of perpendicular are to be found, that is to say, their architecture corresponds with the date of 1380, usually assigned to the rebuilding of the Town, and is also in accordance with its subdivision into three parishes—St. Clement's, All Saints, and St. Mary-in-the-Castle,* which latter Parish we now hear of for the first time. It came into existence through the sea-faring people leaving their ancient homes in St. Michael's lower down the valley, and clustering round the Castle Hill, and so forming a new quarter. Possibly the new course of the Brook had something to do with this, causing the gradual shifting of the harbour-mouth from near White Rock to what we now call Pelham Place; and the Castle Chapel, being a handy place of worship, grew to be looked on as their church, and the district as their parish.

* Barry's Guide, 1794.

In the previous century Old Winchelsea, which stood on low ground, and was dependant on artificial defences against the sea, had its walls destroyed by Prince Edward, when he took it by storm after the Battle of Evesham. The consequence was that, within ten years, the town was overwhelmed by the waters, and the townsmen having made their peace with the Prince, now King Edward I, he granted them lands, on which they erected New Winchelsea. The circumstances under which Old Winchelsea and Old Hastings were transferred to other sites are very similar, the change in both cases being due to a combination of political and natural causes, and in both cases not a vestige of the original town remains.

For 30 years after this desertion of the older town the Monks of the Holy Trinity gallantly held their ground; but in 1410 they too had to succumb to their enemy the sea, and to leave their old haunts, where they had been ensconced for 220 years. They retired to Warbleton, where Sir John Pelham gave them lands, as we have seen, in lieu of the inundated site. Sir John's grant is dated 1413, but the buildings must have been begun about 1410, for we find them sufficiently advanced in 1412 for the Bishop of Chichester to pass a night in the new Priory.

The lower part of the valley became gradually reduced to the condition of a swamp, and had to be utterly abandoned both by burgesses and priests.

During all these years there existed some slight

intercourse between Hastings and the Norman Town of Fécamp, as the French Abbot had never ceased to be the Superior Lord of the New Burg, and in his capacity of Lord of the Manor of Brede, in spite of the fierce French wars, must have exercised considerable authority over the inhabitants of the New Hastings, for the most part situate in his own demesne, especially in presenting to the Churches of St. Clement's and All Saints, though this patronage was frequently interrupted, as the Crown would present in time of war. In 1414 this connexion was much weakened.

We are so accustomed to associate the great changes of the Reformation with the reign of Henry VIII, that we run the risk of forgetting the ferment of protestation raised in the reigns of Richard II and of Henry IV by the Lollards against both the doctrines and the excessive wealth of the Church of Rome. This rose to such a pitch in the first year of Henry V, that it was openly and formally proposed that the whole of the enormous revenues of the English Church should be sequestrated for the use of the Monarch and the State. This alarming suggestion caused the English clergy, with the view of saving their own possessions, to offer to the King's use all the revenues drawn from England by foreign abbeys and priories. Accordingly, all alien Priories were suppressed in 1414, and the Abbot of Fécamp, among others, fell under the provisions of the Act of Parliament, his income passing to the Crown. The

Manor was then granted to the Nunnery of Sion* But the Abbot still managed to retain some hold on his ancient property, though he no longer presented to the churches; for we find that, under Henry VII, the rents derived by the Abbot of Fécamp from his Manor in Hastings were 35s. 4d. a year, of which the Bailiff of Hastings paid 5s., perhaps for the use of the Courthouse; but this is no clue to the real value of the Manor, which would depend on the amount of fines for the renewal of the leases, the leases being for a nominal amount.

Soon after the dissolution of the alien Priories, we find two eminent men presented by the Crown to All Saints, and some curious exchanges between St. Clement's and All Saints. In 1417, John Faukes was presented to All Saints, and in 1424 he changed over to St. Clement's, and was then made Dean of the College of St. Mary. In 1427, John Morton was presented to All Saints, and the two parsons formed a life-long friendship. John Morton became for a time Chancellor of Chichester, in which office he was succeeded by his friend, John Faukes. In 1446, Morton was Moderator of the University of Oxford, which implies a man versed in all the learning of the time. In 1461, Faukes was made Master of the

* And at its dissolution in 1539 to Sir Anthony Browne; from his descendants the Montagues it passed to the Bromfields, thence to the Comptons, and in 1782, by marriage, to George Henry Cavendish, Earl of Burlington. In 1882 the Manor was purchased by Messrs. Payne and Brettell.

Rolls (the great legal offices were mostly held by clergymen), and in 1467 the parson, who, in his early days, had kept exchanging between St. Clement's and All Saints, reached the exalted dignity of Lord Keeper. In 1472, Morton, too, became Master of the Rolls, and in 1479 was consecrated Bishop of Ely. He was arrested, when Hastings was beheaded by the Protector in the Tower.* It was he to whom Gloster spoke: "My Lord of Ely, when I was last in Holborn I saw good strawberries in your garden there; I do beseech you send for some of them." (Richard III, Act 3, Scene 4.) The History from which Shakespeare drew his information, and which gave the outline of the detestable character of Richard, is principally founded on conversations which Sir Thomas More had with his master when serving in Morton's family. On the accession of Henry VII, which the Bishop greatly contrived to bring about, he was made Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Chancellor of England, and in 1487 the whilom priest of All Saints became Cardinal Morton.

Jack Cade's rebellion was in reality an uprising of Sussex and Kent, participated in by such dignitaries as the Bailiffs of Pevensey and Seaford (both limbs of Hastings), the Constables and the Prior of Lewes, and the Abbot of Battle; and the statesmen against

* This Lord Hastings had been presented in 1461 with the Castle of Hastings, and the advowsons of St. Clement's, All Saints', St. George's of Brede, and St. Leonard's of Winchelsea.

whom their animosity was directed, and who became its victims, were both connected with this county: Moleyns, Bishop of Chichester, and Lord Say and Sele, the brother of De Fiennes, the Lord of Herstmonceux, a warrior of Agincourt. Jack Cade, a vassal of the Dacres, was born in the neighbourhood of Herstmonceux Castle, and eleven men of Hastings are mentioned by name as implicated in this insurrection. It may be considered as the beginning of the wars of York and Lancaster, for Jack Cade, in taking the name of Mortimer, showed that the claim of York to the Throne as heir to the Mortimers was popular in these South-Eastern districts, and when the civil wars actually broke out, the Ports generally sided with the White Rose. Amongst those who received pardons we find Bartelotts, Oxenbridges, Lunsfords, and Melewards; the last two names often occurring in our records.

In 1496 Hastings had 30 archers, 30 billmen, and 100 men incompletely armed, and about the same time we find a curious fractional arrangement of the ships: Hastings contributing 3¾ ships, Romney, 3½, Sandwich 10½, Seaford 1¼, Pevensey 1¼, Folkestone ½, and Fordwich ¾. The dress of the sailors of the Ports in 1513 was a white cotton coat with a red cross, and underneath the arms the half-lions and half-ships. In 1544 Henry made Seaford a corporate body, consisting of Bailiff and Commonalty, in order to induce that ancient limb of Hastings to furnish somewhat more than five-fourths of a ship. In his

charter he says, "the town of Hastings, *one of the greatest of the ancient towns of the Ports aforesaid*, and near the sea, where the entrance of our enemies and rebels may soonest appear, is by the flux and reflux of the sea, and by conflagrations there often committed by such our enemies, not only of lands and tenements, but also of the inhabitants there, so reduced to waste, destruction, and poverty, that the said town or the Barons, and honest men of the same, are not sufficient to find their part of such shipping to us, and our heirs, as they ought of their own strength, without their insupportable expenses."* Towards the end of Henry's reign, owing to the general suppression of Chantries, those in this neighbourhood became the property of the Crown. They were Salern's and Gawthren's Chantries,† and the Jesus Altar in St. Clement's; but the good people of Hastings seemed to have no inclination to let these revenues pass out of the Town, and so we learn that in 1547 the bulk of the Chantry lands remained concealed as far as any knowledge of the Crown concerning them went. In 1570 an examination was instituted by the Royal authorities with regard to these concealed lands, but proved almost fruitless. Why it was so difficult for the Crown to obtain

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* Horsfield i, 278.

† Chantries were small endowments: priests receiving a stipend for saying mass for the souls of those who made the endowment. The Salerns flourished at Winchelsea, 1335.

evidence was because some of the principal persons of the town had appropriated these lands, and were therefore in a league to stifle all enquiries. However, in 1581, there was a second examination, which was partially successful, and it was found out that tenements had been concealed by several burgesses, one in particular, Thos. Barley, was no doubt father to the John Barley, Mercer, and grandfather to the Thomas Barley, whose names are recorded on a monumental brass in St. Clement's Church, and after whom Barley Lane, leading up to Fairlight Place, is named. Thomas Lasher had appropriated Palm-tree House, a descendant and namesake of whom, in 1701, left £3 10s. to be annually distributed amongst seven poor men, inhabitants of the Town and Port of Hastings, which charity still exists.

One mode of concealment was to pull down or draw away the tenements—we may suppose them to have been of wood—and that when pulled down the material was employed to erect a building elsewhere. I should have had some difficulty in understanding the drawing away tenements had I not been eye-witness many years ago to the actual drawing away of one of the houses at the corner of Caroline-place and Castle Street. It was a small wooden house with a Fishmonger's Shop on the ground floor, and it was put bodily on a cart and carried to Silverhill, where I often saw it afterwards with half the name of the Fishmonger still upon it. Very near that identical spot, only on the opposite side of the road, a similar

occurrence took place 300 years ago, for one of the places concealed was "one little plot of waste ground whereupon hath stood one little shop, lying to the Main Rock (*i.e.*, the Castle Cliff) towards the north, and to the Queen's Highway leading from Hastings to the Priory to the south, which shop was drawn from the said plot." One Weston pulled down a tenement concealed, and Mr. Richard Lyffe was a great offender. He was Bailiff at the time of this investigation, and had been Bailiff four times previously, and Member for Hastings during the greater part of Elizabeth's reign; and other members of his family were Mayors at a later period, in fact the culprits all appear to have been persons of high position in the Corporation. The names of John Barley, Lunsford (descended from the Pelhams), and Lasher, each occurring more than once in the roll of Chief Magistrates, and a Lasher being Captain of the Trained Band and M.P. Mr. Lyffe is described as having pulled down and carried away six or seven shops; by what authority they know not. Some of the tenements were in the Butchery (now Hill Street), and not only Lyffe, the actual Bailiff, but Jeffrey, who had been Bailiff during the three preceding years, had received rent for her Majesty's shops. The end of it all was that in 1588 the Queen gave the above Chantries and Altar of Jesus to the Town, thinking, perhaps, that the Corporation would get to the bottom of these mysteries easier than she could. She by the same deed gave many other rights and

privileges: lands and a Church House, also "all that our parcel of land and our hereditaments called *the Stone Beache*, with the appurtenances in and upon the said land, called Stone Beache, and the Cliff Lands given by one Jenetta a Clyve, otherwise Clyff [a descendant of John Atte Clyve, Bailiff in 1453], and lands belonging to Thomas Colgate, and Magdalen's Lands and Churchefields, and fresh and salt marshes [not improbably the lands which we call the Salts, beyond Bopeep], and land concealed, subtracted, or unjustly detained from us, and the advowson of the rectory and church of the blessed Mary-in-the-Castle, of Hastings aforesaid, commonly called or known as the Castle Parish and St. Andrew, or by the name of one of them [St. Andrew's must have been meant, St. Mary's being in other hands. St. Andrew's was used by the town as the burial place for suicides, and in 1687 an excommunicated widow was buried there] with all their rights and appurtenances. To hold by fealty only in free and common soccage, and not in chief or by knight's service, paying yearly £25." The Town had henceforth the right of electing a Mayor—the Chief Magistrate having hitherto borne the title of Bailiff. In 1586, preparations were made against the Armada, and the Muster Roll has many names common in Hastings now. The following are only some that strike one as familiar—Taught, Farrant, Wood, Butler, Bennett, Stace, Daniel, Meadows, Hyde, Palmer, Bossum, King, Winkfield, Fisher, Holman, Lott, Boys, Mason, White. There were 20 Hastings vessels from 20 to 50

tons, and 106 "hable maryners." The largest Hastings ships that contended with the Armada were the *John* and the *Gift of God*, each 42 tons. The Hastings Mariners were a fierce set. To this day when a Hastings boat enters a Western Harbour, a hatchet is held up, referring to some murderous deed of olden time.

It is specially mentioned in the Corporation Records that Thomas Lake, Jurat of Hastings, was Captain of a ship of the Ports under the Earl of Essex at the sacking of "Cales" (Cadiz, 1596), when he fought manfully with many great Spanish ships and galleys, to his great renown.

In 1632 we notice a great moral improvement—"only 27 rogues whipped in 4 months." In 1645 a brick tenement is mentioned in Winding Lane. This lane, which still exists, practically gives the site of the old Hundred. The repair of the wall occurs as an item for the last time in 1667, and in 1702 the last bit of the mediæval Court House was pulled down.

The first house of what may be termed modern Hastings was built in 1657. It was the beginning of Suburb Street, now familiar enough under the name of George Street. In the same year it was enacted that no ships should be built, except from the West Fort and Waste Beach towards the Priory. In 1674 rope walks stretched from the West Fort (*i.e.*, west of the Marine Parade) towards the Priory, under the Castle Cliffs. In 1695 the records state that bachelors and widows were taxed 1s. yearly.

The discovery of the New World, and the doubling of the Cape of Good Hope, brought into existence ships of much greater burthen, and drawing more water than those which had hitherto served for commerce and warfare in the narrow seas; the havens, which had sufficient depth for the smaller craft of former days, could not admit more modern ships of war, and were deserted for the grander harbours of Portsmouth and of Plymouth. A pier ran into the sea near the harbour mouth, situated not far from the Albion, at the confluence of the Bourne and the Priory Brook. [See Map of 1291.] The former, after passing midway between St. Clement's and All Saints' Streets, took a westerly direction along George Street, meeting the Brook coming along York Buildings and Castle Street. In my own recollection a dried up part of the old stream at the back of Beach Cottages was marked off and used for boats condemned by the Custom House.

In 1562 the Bailiff of Hastings had an interview with Cecil, the Queen's Secretary of State, the famous Lord Burleigh, respecting the harbour, and in 1578 the Queen issued Letters Patent authorising money to be collected for putting the old pier or "harborough" in good repair. Money was accordingly raised, but, unfortunately, "was quickly converted into private purses, and the public good neglected." In 1595 there was an attempt to rebuild the pier, but the first winter-storms broke it away. In 1596 another was begun, but before the end of the year all

the money was spent. In 1597 the Minnis land was sold for £20, and it was arranged that the pier should be completed by November 1st. On that very day, in less than an hour, the new work was overthrown, leaving the Corporation £200 in debt. The lands between the Old London Road and the Fish Ponds, which we now call the Clive Vale Estate, amounting to 60 acres, were let for 6s. a year,* and the concealed lands now forming part of the Sayer's Estate, rented by Mr. Milward at 5s. a year, were sold for £160. (The Lessees had obviously had a good bargain.) These were the lands that had been recently presented to the Town by the Queen. In 1611 there was an order that the *peere* be *presently* (immediately) repaired, and a tax of £50 levied, with a shilling forfeit for those who did not come to labour. In 1613 there was a survey, and in 1615 4d. a ton on *exported iron* re-established for the maintenance of the pier, reminding us of the iron manufacture in the neighbourhood. In 1617 the fishery doubled their quota, and a tax on beer was imposed. Next year the Mayor and Mr. Eversfield went to the Lord Warden regarding the pier; and Letters Patent

* Clearly there was favouritism here. Sixty acres at 6s. a year is little more than a penny an acre; the poorest land would have been more valuable than that. Two hundred years previously, Wat Tyler's people wished land to be let at no more than 4d. an acre; and 4d. was much more valuable in King Richard II's time than in Charles I's: and we have seen at the time of the Reformation that land about here was worth 1s. an acre

were again obtained in 1620 for collections for the pier, 5s. a day being paid to a deputy to travel through Essex, Middlesex and Herts (*i.e.*, almost the rent of 60 acres). Hants, Wilts, Dorset, Cornwall, Devon and Somerset were also visited. In 1621 the work of the pier was to cease "as soon as the head already framed be set to the new work," and timber to be procured so as to recommence in spring. In 1622 more money was wanted. In 1635 a last attempt was made, by the advice of an eminent Dutch engineer, to make a fresh harbour at the Priory Stream. This is the intended haven of the Map.* The estimate, including the cost of a pier, was £220,000. In 1636 a petition was addressed to Charles I, stating that in antient times the said town hath been an eminent port, and had supplied sea fish to his Highness's board, to London, Westminster, and the country, but for want of a harbour daily, the more deserted. There was great decay of the pier, which cannot long endure (it could not then have been entirely destroyed); "indeed, the pier may go away every stormy tide." 1637. The King granted a collection, and a penny a ton on shipping passing Hastings. The owner of the Priory lands (where the Haven was to be) promised £2,000; but the affair, we are told in the Corporation Records, was given up for want of £20 to carry on the suit. Moreover, these were troublous times; the King's difficulties

* Page 21.

with Scotland were just begun, which developed into the still greater difficulties with his English Parliament, and, eventually, into the great Rebellion. In 1656 a storm washed away the remains of the pier.

When an east wind sets in and drives off the beach from the front of the Marine Parade, the old plan of the old pier can be seen. The tops of the piles have been sawn off, but they are, nevertheless, plainly visible.

The pier began in front of the Albion, curving round to the east, and continuing in a straight line for 200 feet—where a battery or fort projected into the sea, and then continued for another 100 feet. At the end a jetty projected also into the sea, parallel to the fort.

The two Members who sat in the Long Parliament for Hastings both had their estates sequestrated in 1643; John Ashburnham for having reported to the King what passed in the debates, and Sir Thomas Eversfield for having, after his appointment as Parliamentary Sequestrator for Sussex, deserted to the King. In the same year Colonel Morley, a leading Roundhead Officer, marched to Hastings; he demanded money from the Town, and sent it to Battle. Some of his troops were quartered in All Saints' Church, and one of them preached from the pulpit, and another stole the surplice. Mr. Carr, the Parson of St. Clement's, had escaped; but Mr. Hinson, the Curate of All Saints, was arrested, and locked up in a loathsome cell with a Tinker, who was

not jovial, but, claiming seniority, took possession of the only bench, leaving the reverend gentleman to sleep on the floor. Rye is described as a factious town not far off. Edmund Waller, the poet, author of that beautiful little poem, "Go, lovely Rose, tell her that wastes her time and me," was Member for Hastings in the Pension Parliament, which lasted from 1661 to 1678, his colleague being John Ashburnham.

At the head of the Town, near All Saints' Church, was the Market Cross, sometimes known as North End's Cross.* Here open market was held; and the field by the pound (which still exists) was the place for the carts. The gallows, the whipping post, and the stocks, were all close to the pound. All Saints' Street ended at New Gate, situated at the top of a flight of steps. This gate was taken down about 1820. At the junction of Bourne Street and Courthouse Lane were the two great Towers of the Water Gate. The Sea Gate was at the Bourne's mouth. The Drawbridge Gate was at the bottom of High Street, and the open space adjoining was called the Hundred Place, where the Bailiff was chosen and the chief business of the Corporation transacted, and the election of Barons to Parliament took place. There was an outer Tower a little to the west of the Hastings Arms in George Street, and another close to the Tamarisk Steps. The Mercer's Hall was situated

* Suss. Arch., xii, 196. See Map of 1291.

at the foot of All Saints' Street, and the space around is still called the Mercer's Bank. Hill Street, close to St. Clement's, was once the Corn Market, for its ancient name was Cornhill; and it was also used as a Butcher's Market.

Fécamp and Battle were Benedictine Monasteries. St. Leonard's, Higham, part of Brede was enclosed within Winchelsea in 1331, the Abbot of Fécamp claiming indemnity. The Castle Fields there still pay rent to Brede Manor. Close to the Mill, N.W. of Winchelsea, are traces of St. Leonard's Church, and here you are within the bounds of Hastings. Inside this Church was a moveable figure of the Saint holding a Fane, which women, after making an offering, turned so that the wind should serve their husbands and lovers.

Sir Matthew de Hastings (see p. 184) was Bailiff of Old Winchelsea from 1266 to 1274. In 1273 Edward I wrote to him to expel all Jews.

A list dated 1292, the year of Lady Petronilla's deed (p. 120), is given in Cooper's Winchelsea (p. 44), of the 725 householders who removed from Old Winchelsea to New. Several Salerns, Melewards and Alards occur. There are 50 women, and 12 are Petronillas. Two Salerns were Commanders of Ships of War, and one represented Winchelsea at a Brotherhood and Guestling at Romney: so the family was of consequence. One of them probably founded the Salern Chantry in St. Clement's.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CUSTUMAL.

WHILE treating on the antiquities of the Town, some account of the Custumal of Hastings, that is, of the Old Laws and Customs by which the Port was governed, may not be without interest. They are said to have been used time out of mind, but the existing Custumal, of which there is a Norman-French Copy at Rye, was compiled in 1356, when John Reade was Bailiff. Our own copy was lost in 1736, when the Hastings Custumal and our Book of Records of King Edward IV's time were sent up to London to be produced in a case where the right of an eldest son, born after his father was free, was to be tried, and have never been heard of since.

CUSTUMAL.

1. The Bailiff is to be chosen by the Commonalty in the Hundred Place, on the Sunday after "Hock Day" (the second Tuesday after Easter).

2. The Bailiff has to swear fidelity to the King and to the Commonalty of Hastings.

3. If the Bailiff, when chosen, refuse to accept office, the Commons are to beat down his principal tenement.

4. The Bailiff on the day of his Election is to choose 12 Jurats.

5. The Bailiff and Jurats, with the assent of the Commonalty, on the same day, are to choose a Town Clerk.

6. The Bailiff is to choose a Sergeant, who is to swear "So help him God and the Saints," he will be faithful. If anyone be indicted, the Sergeant is to arrest him, if he can find him, until a Hundred (Court) be ordered, when he shall be arraigned for the felony.

7. The Bailiff to act as Coroner.

8. Accusations involving Life and Limb. The Accused has to be acquitted by 36 men. If 36 Freemen (their names being plainly written by the accused) do not answer to their names, the Accused shall be delivered to death. Of the 36, 12 being set aside by the King, and 12 by the Bailiff; then if the Accused and the remaining 12 swear he was not guilty, he is acquitted, and the Accuser is arrested, and all his goods forfeited to the King.

9. Execution of Felons. The condemned is to be cast beyond a certain Watercourse, called Stortisdale (seemingly the Asten), on the western part of the Town towards Bolewarheth (proving that in 1356 the Town was considered to stretch towards Bulverhythe. The punishment in those days was by drowning; the privilege of hanging people was not conferred till the reign of Edward IV).

10. Accusations involving Life and Limb. The Defendant to be arrested. The Accuser to give security that he will prosecute; if it concern the losing of life, the Accused's moveable goods to be sequestrated, but not confiscated; and if condemned, then all moveables are forfeited to the King; and house and rent to the King for a year and a day; and afterwards to go to the heir of the Accused, or in default to the Lord of the Manor; the 36 men may be from other Ports, and in that case time must be allowed for them to come.

11. Accusation relating to Theft of Goods. If the Accused can get anyone to say that the Goods found in his possession were given him by the other, then the other takes his place, and can have recourse to the 36 men.

12. Sanctuary. If a man flee to a Church, and shall confess to the Bailiff his felony, his goods shall be confiscated to the King, and he shall remain 40 days in the Church; and then, at the entrance to the Churchyard, swear to quit the country; and he shall choose a Port for his passage; and he shall take the Cross; and the Bailiff shall make proclamation that no one shall harm him, while he keepeth the King's Highway to the Port he hath chosen.

13. Concerning Stealing a Purse. One of the ears of the Thief shall be cut off in the Market Place or elsewhere, and the Thief thus mutilated shall be led to one of the extremities of the Town, and shall swear to quit the Town, never more to enter it, under pain

of losing the other ear; and if he steal a purse a second time he shall lose the other ear, and swear to quit the Town under pain of losing his life; and if a third time, he shall suffer judgment.

14. Suspicion of Felony. A suspected person shall be arrested, and shall be set free on persons becoming security that he will behave well and truly for the future; and if he cannot get such sureties, he shall swear to quit the Town until he can.

15. No arrest without there be witnesses for the Plaintiff. The Bailiff cannot arrest a suspected person without the assent of the Jurats.

16. Arrest of a Foreign Felon. If a freeman or a stranger shall flee to the Town for refuge on account of Felony or anything else in foreign parts, he shall not be arrested without witnesses for the plaintiff, so long as he shall behave well and faithfully, unless the Warden of the Cinque Ports shall, assigning cause, order so; and if he can find six sureties, he shall be delivered to them out of prison.

17. If a Felon flee to another Town, the Bailiff may demand him, wheresoever he be, save in a Church; and he shall be punished according to the custom of the Town in which he is received.

18. Concerning Bloodshed. The Bailiff may arrest without witnesses for the plaintiff, if a man draw blood with violence, but he cannot put him in prison, unless the injured person complain; but he may require surety of him to keep the peace. The Jurats are to

help when called upon on the King's behalf, if anyone resist the Bailiff.

19. Concerning the seizure of a true man's goods. If the goods of another man are included in a felon's goods, such goods are to be restored to the owner.

20. Court of Weights and Measures. The Bailiff and Jurats are to hold an Ale and Bread Assize, (*i.e.*, a Court to examine ale measures and bread weights,) and to maintain the King's standard, and to mark all measures with a common sign.

21. Freeman. A stranger inhabiting Hastings, and plying some honest trade, and being of good repute for one year and a day, shall come before the Bailiffs and Jurats in open Court, and ask for the Freedom (of the Town), and it shall be awarded how much he shall pay the Commonalty in order to have the Freedom; which award being made, his name shall be entered on the Common Roll; and he shall swear to be loyal to the King and the Commonalty of Hastings, to maintain the dignity of the Freedom, and to pay scot and lot (*i.e.*, his proportion of the rates and taxes) for his goods and chattels; and kiss the Bailiff's right cheek.

22. Form of Enrolment. Memorandum: That in Open Hundred Court, held at Hasting, *i.e.*, on Sunday, next before the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the thirtieth year of King Edward the Third, from the Conquest (1356), before the Bailiff and the whole Commonalty, William de Boum and John his son are received into the Freedom of Hasting, and

they satisfied the Bailiff and the Commonalty with one cask of wine.

23. Of taking Recognizances. If a married woman has property belonging to her, and come before the Bailiff and Jurats in the absence of her husband, and says she is prepared to sell, and is not constrained by her husband, the deed shall be then read *in English* by them before the said wife, and if she, being of good memory, is willing to do it, the Recognizances shall be entered in the Common Roll; and after she and her heirs shall have no claim to the said property; if she be feeble, the Bailiff and any of the Jurats are to go to her.

24. Baron (Freeman) and Wife jointly seized. If the wife of any man enters into a recognizance: in case of a condition that she and her busband shall be again jointly enfeoffed, the Bailiff and Jurats shall notify the said condition.

25. Grants in Mortmain, without License from the Crown. The Bailiff and the Commonalty may grant and confirm the Mortification *(i.e.*, appropriation to ecclesiastical purposes) of lands, tenements, and rents, and other possessions, being within the Franchise (Liberties of Hastings), as well for a Chantry of Masses as for the maintenance of Hospitals, or in honour of a Holy Church, that is to say, *St. Clement*, and *St. Michael*, and *All Saints*, without License from the King or other Lord. (We have here a proof that in 1356 the three Town Churches were St. Clement's, St. Michael's, and All Saints.)

26. Of Sureties of the Peace. A man if required is to give Sureties not to break the peace, which if he do, anyone may arrest him, and take him to prison for 40 days; and if he do not then give Bail, he shall be fined.

27. On receiving Pleas. Pleas to be received by the Bailiff or Sergeant. A Court to be held from fortnight to fortnight, if both parties are resident, in the Courthouse of our Sovereign Lord the King: except it be a matter of Life or Limb; when the Court shall be holden in the Hundred.

28. Arrest for Assault or Bloodshed. For Assault, Bloodshed, Burglary, or Maiming, the defendant is to remain in prison, unless he obtain sureties, until his trial. There shall be no delay in holding the Court.

29. Plea of Debt, or of Broken Covenant. If not present at the first Court, Distraint; if not at the second (alias), Arrest; if not at the third (pluries), a Fine to the King. (The terms "alias" and "pluries" refer to a variation in the form of the writ: in the first writ the King simply commands; in the second the King commands *alias*, *i.e.*, as before; in the third the King commands *pluries*, *i.e.*, as he has often.)

30. Proceedings with Heirs and Executors. A Plaintiff must prove his debt by two or three credible persons who saw and heard the transaction.

31. Seizing the Goods of a Foreign Debtor. A Freeman may seize the Goods of a Foreign Debtor within the Liberties of Hastings, going to the Bailiff.

On the Goods being let go, both Debtor and Creditor shall pay a fine to the King.

32. Imprisonment after Judgment. The Bailiff shall detain the Defendant in Court till he make agreement with the opposite party. Damages shall be assessed, if required, by the Bailiff and Jurats.

33. A Freeman to have a Summons against a Freeman. If a Freeman complains of another Freeman, and comes into Court without summoning him, the other may say: "Sir Bailiff, may it please you to know that I am a Freeman, and am not bound at once to answer the party, because I have not been warned by summons or arrest before this day to be and appear at this Court; wherefore, Sir, I demand my free summons, and a delay as a Freeman ought to have in this Court."

34. A married woman being summoned shall answer only in the presence of her husband.

35. Pleas of Law. Every Plea of Law shall be holden in the "Hundred Place," in presence of the Bailiff, from 14 days to 14 days, without writ of our Sovereign Lord the King save *Droit Patent* (an open writ "of right," which ought to be first brought in the Court Baron of the Lord of whom the Lands were holden; if the Lord waived his right, the writ "of right" became a closed one, being no longer directed to the Lord, but to the Sheriff), in which case the Sheriff of Sussex shall inform the Warden of the Cinque Ports. Writs to be pleaded as in the King's Courts, save that in some writs there are many delays,

as in Mort d'Ancestor (an enquiry whether the ancestor was possessed of the property on the day of his death, and whether the demandant was the next heir), and in others less. The Bailiff shall record the Pleas of both parties. The Bailiff and Jurats shall proceed to judgment, delivered by the mouth of the Bailiff in open Court. In case of a difficulty the Bailiff and Jurats may have a conference with the Combarons of the Cinque Ports: judgment being delayed to the next Court.

36. Strepe (cutting down trees), Dilapidation, and Distress for Rent. If any man renting a free tenement permit the land or tenement to become ruinous, so that the man who ought to have the rent shall have none, when the rent shall be in arrear a year and a day, he shall obtain from the Bailiff and Jurats in full Hundred power of distress to pay himself; and if he shall not get it before the next Hundred, it shall be adjudged to him that in the presence of true and lawful men he shall take the door or gate, and place it on one side; and if no one come within a year and a day, then he shall drive piles in the ground; and if no man or woman claims the ground within a year and a day, then in the next Hundred possession of the land shall be given to him.

37. Waste by a life tenant. If any man or woman hold a house for his or her life with reversion to another, and shall commit waste, the Bailiff and Jurats on prosecution shall compel him to put it in reasonable repair, and if this is not done the party shall be ejected from the said messuage.

38. Reprisals and Process to be taken against Londoners and others. If a Freeman of Hastings ask for Letters under the Bailiff's or Common Seal, that he may make plaint in another town on this side of the sea, or beyond seas, and nothing is done, a second and a third letter shall be sent; and if the prosecutor then swear upon the Evangelists that he has sent the said letters into such a city, borough, or town, in accordance with his freedom and right, then the whole of that Commonalty shall be condemned in the said debt, in default of justice; and they shall be distrained upon, provided that it shall appear to the Bailiff and Jurats by good and sufficient proof that that debt is true.

39. Buying and Selling in foreign parts, and distraining a Portman. If a Freeman of Hastings be hindered from buying or selling in London, or in the Ports of England, France, Scotland, or elsewhere; or if distress be unjustly levied, or tolls from which they are exempt, or any damage by land or sea, for which the injured parties shall write their names; and if on demand of two or three freemen, the town complained of shall not conform to demand, nor give reason why not, reprisals shall be taken of that Commonalty, until it shall set right the damages and trespass. The same of a Lord and his Tenants. The Freemen of Hastings are to be dealers in merchandise, wherever they be, unless convicted of perjury, or having fled from the King's service, or from war, and having done anything against the Liberty of

Hastings ; or shall have refused to pay for merchandise formerly.

40. The Cinque Ports having been opposed in their liberties in the Irish Ports, King Edward III comfirmed their privileges by charter, declaring, " We grant to the same Barons, for Us and for Our heirs, that in all lawful matters, and in merchandise, no one shall be partners of theirs, nor with them, against the will of the said Barons."

41. Brewers may make and sell ale in foreign parts (this seems to mean out of the jurisdiction of the Ports). If any Brewer, a Freeman, make and sell ale in foreign parts in Autumn, and a Lord or Borough distrain on him for selling against the Liberty, the Bailiff shall command the distress to be given up. Because the Barons of Hastings are free to buy and sell throughout the whole realm of England, and if nothing is done, reprisals shall be taken of all the men of the Lordship.

42. Complaints of Freemen against Freemen absent from the Town. If any man of the Town shall complain of another man of the Town in any other place, he shall be punished for his disregard of the Commonalty, unless in defence of the rights of the said Commonalty, and that shall be tried only before the Warden at Shepway.

43. Lands bound by Recognizance. Execution to be levied without plea, provided it be by Recognizance.

44. A Freeman may Claim a Share of Merchandise

Sold. If any denizen or stranger do put to sale any merchandise at Hastings, all present or absent shall have part in the purchase, whether in gross or divided.

45. Division of Merchandise. If a Stranger purchase in the Franchise in the absence of the folk of the Franchise, they of the Franchise shall have half of the Merchandise against the Stranger, if they choose to demand it.

46. Wardship. The Bailiff shall have view of an Infant Heir and his goods and chattels, tenements, rents and lands; and the Infant shall be put to ward to the nearest of his blood to whom his Heritage can possibly descend; and all his goods and chattels shall be delivered to such Guardian by Indenture, until the Infant be of age: one part of the Indenture to be in the Common Treasury. If there be no kin, the Infant to be placed with a sufficient man of the said Commonalty.

47. The Bailiff to be Visitor of the Hospital. The Bailiff shall hold a Visitation of the Hospital of St. Mary Magdalen of Hastings, once every year; and there shall be in the said Hospital Brethren and Sisters, sometimes more and sometimes less; but no Brother or Sister shall be received into the aforesaid Hospital except by the assent of the Bailiff and the Commonalty; and the Rules of the aforesaid Hospital shall be read before the Bailiff at the time of the Visitation; at which he shall demand and enquire whether they be well kept or no, and whether any Brother or Sister have behaved in such a manner that

he or she is unworthy of the House. The Bailiff shall enquire into the life of all the Brethren and Sisters examined, and if any of them be attainted, the Bailiff, by the assent of his Fellows, if he shall find a man in the aforesaid Commonalty infirm, and who has conducted himself in accordance with the usage of the Ports for all time, and who shall be impoverished in his goods and chattels, and have not wherewith to live on them, may put such into the said Hospital to partake of the sustenance of the Brethren and Sisters without paying anything to the said Hospital.

48. Proceedings in actions, and making special Acts for the Town. In all other cases whereof no mention is made here the Bailiff, when the Bailiff is the Judge as in the aforesaid place Hastings, with his Fellows the Jurats (or in a Town where the Mayor is Judge, the Mayor with his Jurats) shall have recourse to the oaths of the Inhabitants; and with them all laws and customs consonant with the Laws of the realm shall originate and proceed.

CHAPTER XII.

HASTINGS, THE PREMIER OF THE PORTS.

HASTINGS, Dover, Sandwich, New Romney and Hythe constitute the Cinque Ports. Hastings, we believe, having always taken the precedency. But, as in 1861 this right of Hastings was challenged by Dover, we propose to examine the grounds of our claim; and in doing so, we have to acknowledge how much we are indebted to the "Statement of the Right of Precedence of Hastings," drawn up by Messrs. Ross and Cooper, and presented by the Corporation to the Lord Warden in 1866.

The claims of Dover may be said to rest mainly on her indubitable Roman origin; on her consequence in Saxon times; on the Lord Warden being Constable of Dover Castle, and the Castle having been used for the imprisonment of the Portmen; on her situation so near the Continent; and on the excellence of her harbour; and specifically on the authority of a paper in the Additions of Dr. Harris's History of Kent, printed in 1719, professing to have been examined in 1692, in which paper the precedency is assigned to Dover.

Several of these pretensions, however, will be seen on consideration, to bear on the question of her importance rather than on that of precedency. We may

concede that as the ancient *Dubris* her antiquity is great; that she was of consequence in Saxon times; that her situation with regard to the opposite coast would always render her a Port much frequented by travellers to and from the Continent; that she alone of the five Ports has in these days a harbour; and yet we still leave untouched the question of precedency, which must be determined by actual evidence.

Also, with regard to these very points, we might contend on the part of Hastings that as the *Portus Novus* she may vie with Dover as representing an ancient Roman Port; that the Freemen of all the Cinque Ports, alike and without distinction, are in every Royal Charter styled "Barons;" and that wherever the name *Barones* appears, as in London and elsewhere, it is evidence of a Roman origin of the Municipia,* *i.e.*, that they were towns governed by *Senatores*: that in Saxon times Hastings ranked as a county on an equality with Sussex and with Kent; that so long as Normandy and England were under the same rule, her position as regards the intercourse between the two states was even more convenient than that of Dover; and that in former times she had as good a harbour.

The association of the two offices of Lord Warden and Constable of Dover Castle, originated in the early Wardens—Godwin, Harold and Odo, having

* Privilegia Londini, p. 33.

been likewise Earls of Kent—to whom the custody of Dover Castle would of necessity be entrusted; and after the time of Henry III, when Hastings Castle had gone to ruin, Dover Castle, the greatest remaining stronghold of the Ports, from its central situation, naturally became the Portmen's Prison.

But, after all, these various items only establish what has never been doubted—the great importance of Dover, much increased, we may add, while Calais was an English Colony. The only piece of evidence adduced on their side of the question is the paper already referred to, and when we come to consider the installation of 1694, we shall see that this document was worthless in itself, and never acted upon.

The question of precedency is between Hastings and Dover, and Hastings and Dover alone, for, from the time of the Conquest, they each had to contribute 21 ships, and Sandwich, Romney and Hythe, but five a piece. We find this specially recorded in the Domesday of the Cinque Ports, and in the Custumal of Hythe. The Ports Domesday* includes an ordinance dated 1229, touching the service of shipping, in which Hastings is mentioned *first* of the Ports. In 1235 the Lords Fitz-Alan, Mortimer and Clifford, Wardens of the Welch Marches, claimed to bear the staves and canopy of Henry III's Queen at her coronation, but "the claim was reputed in a sort frivolous;" the claim being allotted to the Barons of the Cinque Ports, who

* Jeake's Charters, p. 25.

also have the right of sitting at or near the King's table at the right hand of the King. In 1302 a list of the ships contains the names of the Ports and Limbs. Hastings is termed a chief Port, and stands *first*. Romney, Dover and Sandwich follow as chief Ports. Hythe is a Port simply. In 1359 Hastings is mentioned *first** in the services which the Cinque Ports owe to King Edward III; and the liability of Hastings and Dover for 21 ships each was affirmed by that King.

In the Charters of James I, and of Charles I, (1635) and of Charles II, (being the Charters in which the Ports are named), as well as in every record of the services due from them, Hastings is *first* named. In the management of the Herring Fishery at Yarmouth, Hastings always sent two Bailiffs, whilst Dover and the other Ports sent only one each, and consequently Hastings was at twice as great an expense as the other Ports. Hastings also is the *first* Port to which the King's Writ of Summons for the Court of Shepway itself was directed, as is shewn by the copy given by the learned Bracton (who wrote his treatise on the Laws of England in the reign of Henry III) in his De Corona iii, 127, beginning, "The King to his beloved and faithful Bailiffs of Hastings, greeting."

The Court of Shepway derived its name from the ancient place of meeting in the neighbourhood of Hythe, which was central for all the Ports; but the

* Jeake's Charters, p. 28.

Warden had the right to hold the Court at any place within the Ports; and it has been held at several places, and especially at Dover.

It was a kind of Parliament of the Cinque Ports, and known as the Portmote. The Court punished infringers of its privileges; and fined those inhabitants of the Ports who disobeyed its authority. The Court also made laws for the Ports, regulated the Herring Fishery at Yarmouth, and heard appeals from the Courts of each Town.*

After the Writ of Summons to the Court of Shepway had been issued to Hastings, there followed Writs to Romney, Hythe, Dover and Sandwich.

In like manner Hastings was the *first* Port to which other Royal Writs were issued from time to time; and it is and has been the *first* named in the precepts of the Lords Warden for holding the Courts of Shepway.

Besides the Court of Shepway, presided over by the Warden, and always held at his installation, there were the Courts of Brotherhood, and the Courts of Brotherhood and Guestling. These Courts were meetings of the Ports held independently of their Warden, and for the regulation of their own affairs. They were presided over by their Speaker, each Port in turn being Speaker; and when Hastings was not Speaker, then the Bailiff or Mayor of Hastings always sat on the right hand of the Speaker, and the Mayor of Sandwich, if he was not Speaker, on the left. In

*Grand Court of Shepway, p. 103.

1615, Romney claimed to sit at the right hand of the Speaker; but on the 25th July of that year, it was "ordeyned and established that the Mayor of Hastings doe enjoy his place at the right hand of the Speaker."*

The most important ceremony in the Kingdom is the Coronation of the Sovereign. On that occasion the question of precedence is always settled with great care and regard to the interests of all claimants. At every Coronation Hastings has occupied the *first* places on the right of the King and of the Queen. At the Coronation of James II and his Queen, eight Barons of the Ports supported the Canopy of the Queen on the right, and eight on the left; while eight Barons of the Ports supported the Canopy of the King on the right, and eight on the left. They were all dressed in Doublets of Crimson Satin, and Scarlet Hose, over which hung Scarlet Gowns lined with Crimson Satin. Their Black Velvet Caps were fastened on their sleeves, and they had Black Velvet Shoes. Three Barons—Mr. Richard Watts, Captain Edward Milward and Mr. William Holland—stood for the Port of Hastings, foremost of all on the right of the Queen; then stood two Barons for Dover, two for Hythe, and one for Rye; while on the left stood three Barons for Sandwich, two for Romney, one for Rye, and two for Winchelsea. Three other Barons—Sir Denny Ashburnham, John

*Black Book of the Ports, p. 149.

Ashburnham, Esq. and Thomas Muns, Esq.—stood for the Port of Hastings, foremost on the right of the King; then followed two Barons for Dover, two for Hythe, and one for Rye; while on the left were the three other Barons for Sandwich, two for Romney, one for Rye, and two for Winchelsea. In this case the only Ports represented by six Barons were Hastings and Sandwich; and Hastings was evidently considered superior to Sandwich, as all her Barons were on the right, while those of Sandwich were on the left. All the other Ports—Dover, Romney, Hythe, as well as the two ancient towns of Rye and Winchelsea—were only represented by four Barons.

In the Coronation of William and Mary exactly the same order was followed, the names of the places and Barons being both given in the Rolls. At the Coronation of Queen Anne and George I, the names only of the Barons are given in the Rolls; but the names of the three Hastings Barons, on each occasion, appear *first* on the right of the Sovereign. At the Coronation of George IV, the greatest care was taken to ascertain the rights and claims of all parties; a Record of the Ceremonial is preserved at the College of Arms; it received the approval of the King in Council; and, on that occasion also, Hastings had the precedence on the King's right hand.

The precedence which the Barons of Hastings have under the patent of Edward III, and which they have in the presence of the Sovereign at the Coronation, they claim as of right in his Courts held within the

jurisdiction of the Cinque Ports. The Court of Shepway is the Court of the Sovereign. It is so styled in its own records. It is now presided over, for the Sovereign, by the Lord Warden, under the Letters Patent of the Sovereign; but in the time of Henry III it was presided over under the King's writ and authority, by the King's Justices Itinerant, and not by the Warden. The Warden, as President under the Sovereign, never has assigned, and cannot assign, a lower rank to any Port than the Sovereign himself has done.

The Claim of Dover was made in 1861, avowedly only on the authority of a paper printed in the Additions (p. 38) of Dr. Harris's History of Kent, published in 1719. It is not pretended to be based on any Record Book of the Court of Shepway itself; and it is not even suggested that at the several Courts of Shepway, held since 1719, Hastings has not on every occasion held the precedence. This paper does not on the face of it bear any authority; the date at the end is left blank; and it professes only to have been examined in 1692 by Thomas Turner, Clerk of Dover, and Seneschal of the Court of Shepway. It has been said on the part of Dover that "it may fairly be assumed that, as the record in question was known to be in existence in 1692, the Court in 1694 was regulated according to it." The assumption is totally unfounded. The account of the Court of Shepway, held in 1694, is printed in the body of the same work of Dr. Harris (p. 482), and in the

Additions, p. 36; and so far from considering the above paper an authority, Mr. Turner gave the accustomed precedence to Hastings; and the very strongest evidence we could wish for in favour of the Hastings claim is this account of the Court of Shepway by Dr. Harris (though curiously enough the passages seem to have escaped the notice of the Dover Authorities, which is all the more marvellous, in that one of them is on the page immediately preceding that from which they extracted their "papers"), for Dr. Harris expressly states, "The Bailiffs and Jurats of *Hastings* shall *first* be called to put in their aforesaid precept, and the names of such Jurats as be summoned of the said Town to appear at the said Court. . . . *And after that* the Mayor and Jurats of *Dover* and *Sandwich*, or which the Court pleaseth to call first of them, for they be both of one strength." And then the Mayors of other places were to be called. He also mentions that this was the course actually pursued.

On June 1st, 1694, in the morning early, the Lord Warden went to Dover Castle, and then in procession on horse-back up to Bredenstone Hill, (the Bredenstone was the ruin of a Roman Light-house on the highest part of the Western Heights, corresponding to the Roman Light-house within the Castle precincts), where the Court was formed, and the Precept read*—"The precedence then was thus:—The Bailiff and

* Harris's History of Kent, p. 483.

Jurats of *Hastings* were to be called to put in the aforesaid Precept, and the names of such Jurats as are to be summoned of the said Town to appear . . *Next* the Mayors and Jurats of the Ports of *Dover* and *Sandwich*, or which the Court please to call first, for they be both of one strength. Then the Mayor and Jurats of *Rye* and *Winchelsea*, or likewise, which the Court will call first. Then the Jurats of *Hithe* and *Faversham*, *Fordwick*, and *Folkestone*, or which the Court will call first of them. And then the Bailiffs of Lidd, Pevensey, Seaford, and Tenterden, and every of them, must bring into the said Court his said precept, and the names of such Jurats as be warned to appear."

The Banner of St. Michael of Hastings, from time immemorial, has been the Banner of the Cinque Ports; and the Arms of Hastings are nearer the Royal Arms than those of any of the other Ports.

Such is the evidence on which Hastings proudly claims to be the Premier of the Ports.

NOTE to page 86.—In the north-eastern angle of the Castle is a raised space, about 70 feet each way, marked [H] in the Plan. These are exactly the dimensions of Gundulph's Keep in Rochester Castle, built at the same time as this, which I take to be the lower part of the Norman Keep or Donjon of our Castle.

The Battlefield.

CHAPTER I.

Introductory.

In 1863 a letter appeared in the *Hastings and St. Leonards News*, suggesting the desirability of the celebration in 1866 of the Octo-Centenary of the Battle of Hastings, and calling upon some townsmen of Hastings by name to undertake the task (myself and the late lamented Mr. J. C. Savery amongst the number). I accepted the challenge, observing that we should not merely be celebrating the fatal Battle, fraught with so many consequences to all our race, but should be marking at the self-same time that eight hundred years of freedom from foreign conquest date from that day.

It had been the annual custom of the Hastings and St. Leonards Philosophical Society to visit some place of archæological or geological interest in our neighbourhood. The Council willingly adopted my suggestion of visiting Battle in the Autumn of 1866, and my energetic *collaborateur*, Mr. Savery, undertook the details of the organisation. As, however, the

event was one of national interest, it was hoped that some of the more important Societies of London and the Provinces would take in hand the celebration, the management of which would then devolve upon them. Mr. Savery consequently entered into correspondence with the British Archæological Association, which Association actually proposed holding a Congress at Hastings, but their arrangements would not allow them to defer their visit till October.* The Sussex Archæological Society were also communicated with, but they had fixed Eastbourne for their Annual Meeting; and although the Historical Society of London at one time proposed to join us, yet, as the time drew near, it was found that if the Anniversary of the Battle was celebrated at all, it must be under the auspices of the Philosophical Society alone.

It became, then, the duty of the Society to call upon some one to give an account of such incidents of the Battle as were known, and pourtray them on the Battlefield itself. To the thorough performance of this task, three points seemed essential: (1) That he who guided them over the Field should have a taste for Archæology, and in particular should be well acquainted with the arms and mode of fighting of the mediæval ages; (2) That he should be a military man, accustomed to judge of ground, numbers, &c.; (3) That he should be familiar with the actual

* Their Congress, which was a very interesting one, was held in August.

neighbourhood of Battle. The Council accordingly addressed themselves to several gentlemen who combined some of these requisites, but were unfortunate in being unable to induce these gentlemen to render the service desired of them.

At the eleventh hour, then, the Council were unprovided with a guide to the Field, and Mr. Savery appealed to me to take the office on myself, he having all the work of organisation to attend to, and being engaged in preparing a paper on the Bayeux Tapestry, to be read on the evening of the same day, illustrated by an enlarged copy of the Tapestry (a work requiring much time and labour); these considerations in a manner forced me to undertake a duty for which no one knew better than myself how little I was fitted. Nevertheless, having undertaken it, I determined to do my best, being able to rely with certainty on the hearty support of my brother Secretary, Mr. Savery (whose loss we have had since so much reason to deplore), whom I had to thank for his friendly aid and valuable suggestions; and especially for his well-executed model of the ground. By permission of the Duke of Cleveland, I was enabled to explore the Battlefield in every direction, and while so engaged, received some very useful hints from the Rev. E. N. Crake, then Dean of Battle.*

* I have been recently indebted to the present Dean, the Rev. E. R. Currie, for a similar courtesy.

CHAPTER II.

The Visit to the Field.

On the 15th October—for the 14th, the actual Anniversary, was a Sunday—a large party set out by rail and road for Battle. It was a bright autumnal afternoon, not a cloud to be seen in the clear blue sky, when a company of some three hundred grouped themselves on the green sward of the Abbey grounds. Dr. Hunt, a Vice-President of the Society, presided over the assembly, and, with the help of Mr. Savery, marshalled the company with the greatest order, and without any loss of time. As each successive point was reached, an oral explanation of that part of the position was given. These explanations form the substance of the present chapter.

The visitors first gathered together in that part of the Field known as Senlac, sometimes corrupted into Sangue lac, or Lake of Blood, where the central attack was made, still known by the name of Battle Lake.

They then moved until they were nearly opposite the building which Mr. Gordon Hills has shown to be the Dormitory of the Monks, but which had been previously more familiar to most of us as the Refectory, and which Horace Walpole mistook for the Church, itself; though its position pointing North

and South, should at once have negatived such an idea. To the North-East of the Dormitory (*i.e.*, as we were standing a little to the right and farther back) is situated the High Altar, where Harold's Standard* was placed, and which fixes with exactness the position of the centre of the English Army. From this point, the ridge, on which the Abbey stands, extends for about 1100 yards to the East, and for a similar distance to the West. Harold's best troops were stationed near that roofless Dormitory; and the spectators were then on ground a little in advance of William's central array. Between them and the Dormitory were small lakes, now dammed up to serve the purpose of fishponds, but which would otherwise be the sources of a stream of running water, following a natural course, and offering a considerable obstacle to the onset of William.

The artificial pond before us brought vividly before our minds the Fosse, which, says Wace, the English made at early morn right across the Field. The position was further strengthened by "Shield Walls," of which there are of course now no traces, since although almost impregnable to the weapons of that age, yet being made of perishable materials, they would disappear altogether in a very short period.

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* The Standard is marked in the Plan; to the left is the ruined Dormitory, and further to the left the main buildings of the Abbey. The line of lakes is shewn precisely as they are now. No trace of the Trench across the main road remains, but its position is determined by its connecting the water courses on either side.

The position of the Norman Army was defined as resting its left wing on the hill overlooking the Powder Mills, washed at the base by the Asten; having its centre near the Battle Lake turnpike, and extending its right wing above the Railway Station, towards Marley Farm, where it would be protected by Bodeherst Wood [called Great Wood in the Plan]. This position is very distinctly marked out by a roadway from the Powder Mills till it strikes a path leading towards the Railway Bridge,* thence by another path along the crest of the spur, overlooking the Station.†

I then guided our party lower down the slopes of the Abbey grounds, but keeping well to the left hand, on the higher ground parallel to the road just named. "Here," I said, "We are gazing on the most open part of the Field, where cavalry alone could act with effect,

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* Where the High Road from Hastings to Battle crosses the South Eastern line.

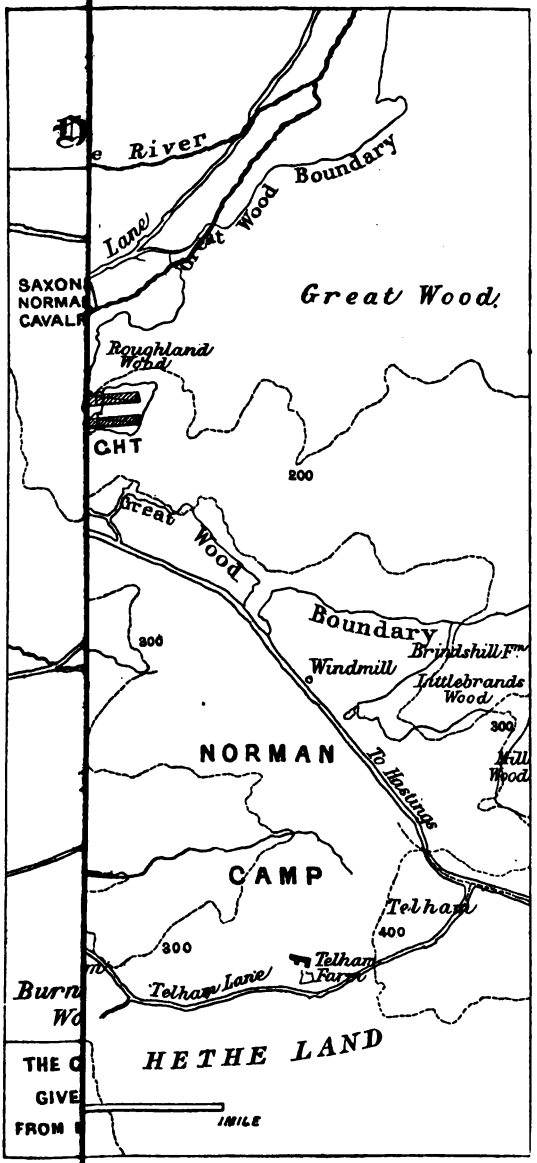
† The above description of the positions of the English and Norman Armies is transcribed almost word for word from the Edition of 1867. As there must seem to many to be a great deal of guess-work in assigning positions to two armies engaged in a battle 800 years ago, it is a great satisfaction to me, that our eminent Historian, Mr. Freeman, writing in ignorance of the existence of my little work, and with opportunities of examining many authorities inaccessible to myself, has in his account of the Battle, published, I think, a couple of years after mine, made the opposing armies occupy, almost identically, the same ground that I have, and I have the vanity to think that we, having independently arrived at the same conclusions, mutually corroborate one another. Of course this remark does not apply to minuter details, in which we naturally somewhat differ.

and where tradition has always placed the principal part of the fight. Of the three divisions of which the Saxon army was composed, we are now opposite the most westerly, viz., that on the right; where also the flower of Harold's army, the men of Kent, were posted. Here must have occurred that disastrous repulse of the Normans, which formed the bloodiest incident of that bloody day; and if the Normans gave way in front of the Saxon right, they would fly in disorder straight up the slope on which we are now standing. But in the course of their flight, the Normans, we are told, came on a kind of precipice or abyss; and it is singular that the many writers on this subject have placed this ravine in almost every quarter of the Field, but have overlooked that it could scarcely be elsewhere than to the rear of the ground on which we are. For it happens that directly in our rear, at a point to which we will now proceed, there is a sudden fall in the ground, and I think I shall be able to prove that there is no ground hereabout which so well answers all the conditions and requirements as that which I am now describing."

We then fell back, leaving the Park and crossing the road, and entered a field bearing to the South-East, where we came upon a precipitous descent looking down upon a deep ravine. "This ravine," I remarked, "or deep valley, runs parallel to the lane at some distance to its rear, becoming shallower higher up towards the Norman centre, where it can easily be crossed." I identify this ravine with the

"*Mal Fosse*" or "Evil Ditch," or, as some old writers have termed it, "The great chasm between the two armies," into which the routed Normans fell, man and horse; and accoutred, as they were, in heavy armour, and coming upon this place without being previously aware of its existence (as Wace expressly tells us), they must have rolled over in utter confusion, and with no power of recovering themselves." I asked my auditors to look well at the position, bearing in mind, moreover, that steep as the hill side is now, the effect of eight hundred years would be to make it much less steep than it then was; for as the soil crumbled from the hill top during the long centuries that had elapsed, it would form a much more easy and gradual slope at the hill foot. With this observation I left it to my friends around to give their verdict whether my precipice was steep enough. A subsequent measurement by Lieut. (now Major) Ottley, R.E., shows that the ground has a fall of 40 feet.

The position we had reached gave us an excellent opportunity of examining various points of interest, which could not be so well viewed from other parts of the Field. To the South-East, a little to our right as we stood, high up on Telham Hill, was a cottage, where, tradition tells us, William's Standard was planted on the morning of the Battle. Here, doubtless, the main army of the Normans armed themselves after their march from the vicinity of the Town of Hastings; here William, in complete armour, vaulted


River
Lane
Great Wood Boundary
SAXON
NORMA
CAVALR
Great Wood
Roughland Wood
CHT
200
Great Wood
Boundary
300
Windmill
Brindshill F
Littlebrands Wood
300
NORMAN
To Hastings
Hill Wood
CAMP
Telham
400
300
Telham Farm
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into the saddle, and seated on his horse, addressed his troops and marshalled them in three divisions. That they dared to march unarmed until they came in sight of the Saxon position, leads us to the necessary inference that their Vanguard must have held in force some strong position lower down, so as to protect the rest of the army from any sudden onslaught of the foe. This must have been about where the Railway Bridge is now; and when the attack commenced, this advanced Division, wheeling towards us, round the head of the ravine by which we were stationed, must have marched parallel to it. If in those days its sides were overgrown with trees and underwood, as we are told was the case, they may have done this without noticing that they had such a dangerous Fosse so near, and their ignorance of its existence would increase their confusion when driven to its verge.

That there were so many non-combatants present who might have been left behind at Hastings, is, perhaps, in a great measure accounted for by the fact already referred to, that the Normans did not wear their armour on their march; we may therefore infer that they did not carry it themselves, as the most convenient way of carrying it would have been to have worn it. We must, therefore, fall back on the supposition that it was carried for them, and as no train of waggons is alluded to (which would involve a great number of beasts of burden), we may conclude that this office devolved on the varlets; for they would wish to keep their light-armed troops

fresh, and therefore would not burden them with the duty.

If, while merely on the march, they found the armour of that day so oppressive that they avoided encumbering themselves with it even for a few miles, we may judge how anxious they must have been to keep to level ground, and how even a gentle declivity would be fatiguing and difficult to ascend in the face of a foe, while on the steep hill, they would scarcely keep their footing.

The varlets released from their porter's office, but still in charge of the baggage, advanced in rear of the deploying columns to a hill which commanded a view of the Battle. Such an eminence would be that on which Quarry House stands, and it happens that nothing intervenes to prevent their having a complete view of anything which might take place here (where we were standing). Supposing, then, the Mal Fosse to be where I fixed it, and the varlets on Quarry Hill, they could not avoid seeing the disaster, and would in all likelihood become panic-stricken, as described in the "Roman de Rou;" and this has an important bearing on the question of the position of the Fosse, and to my mind is a strong confirmation of the correctness of my hypothesis; for I cannot imagine any other spot on the Battlefield (for there are others where the routed Normans might come on very awkward ground in the course of their enforced retreat) where the disaster could be seen by camp-

followers in the rear of the centre of William's army.

Another point to be borne in mind is that the baggage must have been easily accessible from the army, for we read that Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, being on horseback and observing the disorder of the varlets, rode to them, and after allaying their fears, proceeded to rally that part of the army that had been discomfited. Now, it has always struck me as singular, that at such an important crisis in the Battle, Odo should have ridden to the rear first, where those in disorder were non-combatants, and only after he had restored order there, have directed his attention to what would seem to most a more vital part. Two solutions of this difficulty suggest themselves to me: One, that he was with the priests, who are expressly named as having ascended a hill close to the varlets, from whence to watch the fight. Such a one immediately faces us on the opposite side of this ravine; and then it would be in the natural course of things that he should allay the panic of those, by whom or through whom he must pass, before setting out for the more dangerous melée. The other, that a man of his known warlike disposition would hardly coop himself up with brother priests to pray while such a Field was being fought, but would rather range himself with William's central host, where we know all William's other kinsmen were; it may be with no direct intention of personally slaying an enemy, but willing to assist his brother with all that coolness,

wisdom and energy which he knew so well how to display in times of danger. This being conceded, we should imagine him to be in the immediate rear of the Norman centre. Here he would only be some little distance in advance of the baggage, and would be the first to detect any disorder there; while, at the same time, unable to see the rout of the horsemen on the left, and consequently unaware of the cause of the panic behind. But as soon as he rode up the hill to enquire into the cause of their dismay, he would, while calling on them to halt, witness with his own eyes across the valley the terrible overthrow of the Norman chivalry, and at once regaining the main body, would traverse the rear of the army till he came to the fatal spot.

Our party was as much taken by surprise at the existence of this Fosse in this particular part of the Field as the Normans themselves, and after examining it carefully, were fully inclined to endorse my views. In the course of the conversation that ensued, a question was put as to the number of William's troops. I have entered into this question more fully in the following chapter, but I then stated that I could not bring myself to believe that more than 20,000 combatants were present in the Field, especially as we must deduct the very numerous crowd of artificers, menial servants and camp-followers of every description, who we know were brought over in great numbers, and who would fill the place of an equal number of armed men on board ship, but are probably

included by those who reckon the array as high as 60,000.

We now resorted to the hill overlooking the Asten and the Powder Mills, and mounted on a pile of wood, I had the gratification of reading the paper contained in the following chapter to a most attentive audience.*

On the conclusion of the paper, the party wended their way to the Abbey, descending from the hill by a long narrow lane, on the left of which is a wood covering the slope down to the water side. The ground is overgrown with brushwood, and in one of the retreats, notably the third, as will be seen presently, it would have been quite possible for the Normans, if they bore at all to the westward, to come unexpectedly on the banks of the river Asten, which would be hidden from them until they reached it. In some parts the banks are quite precipitous enough to have caused such a catastrophe as that already alluded to, but then it must be remembered that it would have been invisible to the "varlets."

It should be observed, however, that no less than four retreats are enumerated in the Roman de Rou as having taken place, each having distinct features of its own: first, the disorderly flight of the Mal Fosse, which certainly was unpremeditated on the

* My remarks were illustrated by an excellent Model of the Battlefield, kindly executed by Mr. Savery. To render the reading in the open air easier, I endeavoured to give a rhythmical cadence to the structure of the sentences: which however could not be very well imparted to the more prosaic explanations interpolated afterwards.

part of the Normans ; but it may be that the loss that the English themselves suffered in regaining their position after inflicting this disaster on the Normans, may have suggested to the wily Norman leaders the policy of simulating a similar rout, carefully providing against its being converted into a real defeat by stationing a large force in reserve.

This pretended retreat was the second, and although we do not gather from the "Roman de Rou" that it was at once successful, as the entrenchments seem still to have been held, yet it is clear that the very great loss the English suffered when set upon by fresh troops, and hurled back to their defences, so weakened them in point of numbers that they were unable to man their barricades with an adequate force, so that the Normans were at length able to pierce through at a weak and comparatively unguarded point. The Normans having once penetrated in force, it became inevitable that the English should fall back on the heights in their rear, corresponding to some extent with the ground occupied by the Abbey. These heights no doubt were also palisaded, and, being naturally strong, the Normans formed again just below preparatory to an assault on this last defence. The heights facing the South are so steep that they needed but little artificial strengthening, but on the West the ground slopes more gradually, and doubtless a barricade similar to that which had withstood the Norman attack for so many hours in the valley below, formed the Western defence.

It was here the third retreat occurred, for the Normans forced their way on to the plateau; at first in small numbers, one knight actually reaching the Standard, near which his body was found after the Battle, till at length a large force had made good their footing. Then the men of Kent and Essex drove them off the plateau, and, we are told, William saw his men "coming out" in disorder. The exhausted English were, however, unable to improve their advantage, and almost immediately afterwards gave way and were cut to pieces under the charge of the heavy Norman Cavalry. This decided the fate of the day. In this third repulse, inasmuch as the outer line of the English right was everywhere guarded by a ravine or artificial ditch, it is extremely probable that the Normans in their flight from the inner line of defences may have got entangled in the water courses in their rear; but in every other respect the circumstances of the retreats differ, and especially in this, that the slaughter in the first case was very great—greater than any other part of the day—whereas in this case, as the English did not follow up the pursuit vigorously, the Norman loss must have been relatively small.

The fourth check, the last that the Normans encountered, was after Harold had been slain and his Standard taken. After darkness had set in, the Normans were pursuing the English Army, disorganised by the loss of its chief leaders, but hardly knowing that it was beaten; and where the ground was advantageous they turned upon the foe, and slew

many. In some such position as Mr. Lower has pointed out near Caldbeck Hill, to the North of Battle, this fourth repulse of the Normans may have occurred; but we cannot identify his Manfosse with the Monk of Battle's Mal Fosse, for the Monk's was *between* the two hostile armies; neither can we identify it with Wace's Fosse, for on the morning of the Battle, Wace's was *between* the two armies, and after the Normans had deployed into position it was in the Norman *rear*.

As the sun went down, we stood around the spot where eight hundred years before, almost on that very day and at that self-same hour, Harold was beaten to the ground. For many years a faithful tradition had been handed down from father to son that Harold's Standard had stood here; but it was left to our generation, by laying bare a portion of the Crypt of the Abbey Church, to discover the exact site of its High Altar, and so prove the truth of the old tradition.

CHAPTER III.

The Battle of Hastings.

We meet to-day on the most interesting spot on English ground, to call back the memories of eight hundred years, and in imagination to behold once more that bloody strife from morn to eve on which the destinies of England hung, and which shaped the course for good or ill of all our future story; which has left its stamp for ever on England and her wide domains; and, "high mettling" our honest and sturdy Saxon nature with Norman chivalry and enterprise, has raised a race of islanders to be the lords of one-sixth part of the lands trodden upon by man, whose flag is planted in every region of the world.

Had we met but to commemorate the one great disaster of our English annals, we should not be so eager to be here, and should look abashed upon the ground. But we meet here in the proud knowledge that since that fatal Saturday, no foe has lorded it over our peaceful vales. Only when England felt sick to her heart's core, under the tyrant John, when England kept not true unto herself, did foreign banners flaunt fitfully on English soil. Since then full many a mighty host and fleet have hovered threateningly around our coasts, but never dared to face us on our shores; to meet us man to

man; to listen to an English cheer; or stand the charge of English steel.

We feel so far removed from that sad day so fraught to us with weal and woe, that we can calmly gaze on these quiet dales, once filled with strife, but hardly listen unmoved to the spirit-stirring tale.

Small need to say, what all know so well, how it chanced that the two boldest warriors of the age, who had each in his own land no other peer, to whose standards victory seemed chained, and who had fought together as brothers in arms, both claimed to themselves the right to wield the sceptre of this realm. Nor they alone; for Hardrada, Norway's giant-king, and Toustain, Harold's traitor-brother, alike contended for this princely prize.

On the 5th of January, 1066, King Edward the Confessor died;* on the 6th the great Thanes of England and the men of London chose Harold for their King, and crowned him on the morrow. With hound and horn Duke William was starting for the chase when these strange tidings reached him. He left the noisy throng, and passed into his great hall alone, to ponder over what had been and that which was to be. The man who had sworn on rare and holy relics to aid him to the throne; the brave preserver of his life, whom he himself had knighted on the battle-plain, and to whom his daughter was

* The difference of style would throw all events forward about a week.

betrothed, must henceforth be his mortal foe; must be branded as a perjured traitor in every Court of Christendom; must be pursued to the death, even where he stood most secure. Yet even Harold might blench before the awful power of Rome.

But Harold had no such craven soul. The oath forced upon him by his host—that host who owed to him his life—he felt it no dishonour to break, and thought it "foul scorn" to submit to an Italian priest.

> "What earthly name to interrogatories
> Can task the free breath of a sacred King?"

His stout heart quailed not before the consecrated white Banner of the Pope, nor one of the hairs of St. Peter set in a precious ring.

All through that Spring and Summer in Northern France was heard the busy din of warlike preparation. From Flanders many a goodly ship came forth, and ships by hundreds were constructed at every point where timber could be found, till twice a thousand barks were moored in Norman harbours.*

In the Isle of Wight, some twenty leagues away, Harold took post, and noted with watchful eyes this growing force. All Summer he was there, with such fleets and armies as had never before been seen; but on the 8th of September the Saxon people were wont

* The number of ships is variously given from seven hundred to three thousand. The number assigned in the "Roman de Rou" is perhaps the most probable—six hundred and ninety-six.

to lay up store for the on-coming winter,* and "no man could keep them there any longer." His armies melted away, all save his hired soldiers, and many of his ships were lost. The while, the North-East winds kept the impatient Normans in their ports. Hardly had Harold reached his capital, when messengers came posting in to say Northumbria had submitted to a Norwegian host.

In four days Harold was at York, and on the fifth he assaulted Hardrada, who little thought his foe so near, and whose troops were scattered and unarmed. The Norwegians fiercely stood at bay, but Saxon valour broke their iron ring, and Hardrada and Toustain hard by Stamford Bridge were slain. Of five hundred ships, but twenty-four revisited their native Fiords. Meantime the winds veered round, and William's fleet put out to sea, only to be driven by a storm confusedly into the Somme, and all the shores of Normandy were strewn with the bodies of the drowned. Loudly rejoiced the English people and King Harold, and thought the danger o'er; but this confidence was England's ruin.

William's fleet had in the main escaped unscathed, and when afterwards the favouring breeze wafted it across, for the only time in history no fleet was there to guard the land.† William landed with

* Owing to the difficulty in those days of supplying forage they reserved just enough cattle for breeding purposes, and killed and salted all the rest.

† I have left the words as they were originally written; but

the first ships at Pevensey, or, as some say, at Bulverhythe, near the mouth of the Asten. He made Remigius of the Abbey of Fécamp, Bishop of Dorchester, and afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, and one authority tells us it was a reward for the Monk's providing a vessel and twenty men on this occasion; but surely the Monk had done him some weightier services than this. Now all the lands between Hastings and Romney Marsh were fiefs of the Abbot of Fécamp: who, then, so likely as the Abbot's Almoner to induce the men of Hastings to open their gates to William? A course they certainly adopted through some influence or other. The all important possession of their harbour enabled the disembarkation of the stores, horses and famous wooden castles to be carried on in perfect security. Some earthworks were hastily thrown up, which must have abutted on the haven. Traces of such works were visible till lately in Cornwallis Gardens, and some remains can still be discerned at the back of White Rock Villa. These fortifications are spoken of by William of Poitou, William's Chaplain, as "*custodia navium*," "protection for ships," and Orderic mentions that they raised defences as a retreat

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we might cite the absence of a British Fleet on the occasion of Cæsar's invasion, owing to its destruction in the naval campaign against the Veneti, and the enforced detention of the English Fleet in the Thames by the "Protestant" East wind, while the Dutch Fleet under the Prince of Orange was sailing down the Channel, as parallel incidents.

for themselves and a bulwark for their ships—"*Sibi receptaculo et navibus propugnaculo.*"* So William did not, as some writers have alleged, burn his fleet, but took every precaution to preserve it.

Imagine a triangle, with a base of four miles along the coast, its Northern side a lofty ridge extending five miles from Fairlight to Telham, and its Western side a line of heights from Crowhurst Park, running through Hollington to the sea. Two streams, which take their rise from opposite sides of the High Street of Battle,† diverging, one to the South, the other to the East, and known as the Asten and the Brede, with the adjoining marshes, cut off all access to this triangle, except by the narrow pass of Battle, and formed vast ditches as it were to the great natural fortress they enclosed. These heights once occupied by William, his flanks were secured and his armament screened from observation. But at the apex of this triangle (marked by a windmill), the great road to London dipped, as it still does, with a gentle slope into the valley before Battle. To guard this pass was stationed an advanced division under the Count of Boulogne, some thousands strong, encamped along the ridge called Telham, which faces the North : and here I differ from those who assert with Professor Airy that Harold designedly occupied the pass of Battle ; on the contrary, all accounts show that he was

* Lingard, i, 444.

† See Plan of Battle.

in utter ignorance of the true state of affairs until it was too late; that he believed that the great expedition he had been watching all the summer months had been irretrievably damaged by the storm that had strewed the coast of Normandy with wrecks and drowned bodies; and that, when flushed with victory at York, and learning that William had actually landed with a small body, (for the landing was not completed in a day) he reckoned that he had to do with only a small part of that Armada, and that if he came upon them quickly with such troops as could keep pace with him, and such levies of the Southern counties as could be got together, he should drive the Norman invader into the sea with greater ease than he had routed the Norwegians.

The news could hardly have reached him before the 1st, while on the 6th he must have been in London, where he remained six days; for the soldiers, who had surprised Hardrada by one of the most wonderful marches on record, could hardly repeat such a march some six days later. He had therefore to send messengers forth East and West and South, to summon the Southern array. In those six days he would be rejoined by some of his warriors from the North, and at their head, and with such levies as had obeyed his summons, would hurry on like mad; as William's chaplain has it, *Rex furibundus*, and as so reported by the Norman horse sent out by Count Eustace to explore the country, and who retired before the advance of Harold. Many of Harold's troops,

especially the mercenaries, were well armed, but the hastily-raised country levies could have added but little to his strength, having only clubs and picks and iron forks and stakes. Many were without arms, and all were exhausted with their march, especially the veterans who had come all the way from York. With such a force—which, from the position it occupied, and the shortness of time for raising it, I judge to have been under 20,000 men—he emerged from the woods on the plateau now occupied by the town of Battle and the Abbey lands, never dreaming of halting there longer than was necessary to refresh his men, but hoping next day to crush the small invading force. That he so deemed it is shown by his weakening his own force by many thousands during his stay in London, in order to man the vast fleet which had been lying idle in the Thames, when it was sorely needed in the Channel. But the first upward glance he cast on Telham heights must have shewn him that he had been bitterly deceived. The pennons waving on the opposing ridge, the glittering armour, and the long array of spears, told him that many thousand men, at least as valiant as his own, and better armed, and fresh, occupied every coign of vantage; and if he ventured the attack, a thousand horse, the élite of Europe, were ready to be launched upon the flanks of his wearied infantry. Further advance, therefore, was impossible; nay more, it was perilous for him to linger on the plateau. How many thousands more were hidden behind those

hills he could not know, all of whom might be hurled against him. Judging from after the event, his wisest plan would have been at once to have listened to his brother Gurth's advice, and have fallen back towards London, wasting the country as he passed, and gathering up the forces in his rear. But England's Royal Standard now floated defiantly before the Norman host, and if Harold retired before the foe without striking one blow for freedom, he would lose all the prestige of his Northern victory, and his voluntary retreat might be more dispiriting and disastrous than a forced one, from being over-matched in stubborn fight. His resolution was quickly taken to defend the ground on which he stood to the last; and it was singularly adapted to the purpose. Two steep ravines or hollows almost meet in the centre of its rear, being only separated by the narrow ridge along which the High Street of Battle runs; and streams flowing from these ravines wind round either flank, where they unite with water-courses flowing from the front. Thus the rear and flanks were almost inaccessible, and the one great danger of the English being out-flanked or taken in the rear was obviated. The dense woods to the rear and on the flanks increased this security. A portion of the forest on the East of this position still remains under the name of Bathurst, Bodehurst, or Great Wood. The post of honour and of danger—the right wing—was claimed, as of custom, by the Kentish men; the men of London guarded the centre and the Standard; and the worst-

armed men were stationed on the left, where the wood in their front rendered them practically unassailable. William's superiority in numbers as regards disciplined troops was thus in a great measure neutralized. He had to crowd his troops along a similar extent of ground, for he was hemmed in by Bathurst wood on his right, and by the waters of the Asten on his left. The extreme left of Harold's position (not far from the present Railway Station) could only be annoyed by the light-armed troops, if any portion of the forest stretched in front of it; and William's horse and best infantry would therefore of necessity be posted opposite the centre and the right of the Saxon array.

In suggesting such a disposition of the armies, it will be seen that I do not go with Thierry in reckoning William's forces at 60,000 men. I doubt whether he had 20,000 men actually on the ground, after deducting the strong garrisons stationed along the coast from Pevensey to Hastings, the crews of the ships that were not destroyed, the lives that were lost in the storm, and the division cut to pieces at Romney.

To form some judgment on this point, we must recollect that Harold's plateau measured in its extreme length about a mile and a quarter, or 6,600 feet ; and that the nature of the ground only admits of the position being attacked in front, and that we may thus surmise that William's army covered a similar extent.

We learn from William of Poitou and Orderic, that the infantry were drawn up in two lines : the

archers in front, the heavy infantry in the second line. If we take these to number 10,000—and no writer puts them at more—and assume each line to have been two deep, the front rank would consist of 2,500 men. From the "Roman de Rou" we learn they were in three divisions, between which there would be intervals to allow of the cavalry acting. According to the regulations of the English army, each foot-soldier should occupy two feet. The soldiers of old must have taken up at least this space, when we remember that they were more or less cased in armour, and encumbered with shields. 2,500 men then would extend over a distance of 5,000 feet, and allowing for intervals between the centre and the wings, the line would face the whole extent of Harold's position.

The horse, which we will also take to be 10,000 in number, were divided, according to Wace, in three unequal divisions. Other writers allege that William arranged them in five divisions. If we take the latter view, and imagine four divisions on the field and one in the rear, we may suppose two to have guarded the flanks of the centre, and the other two to have guarded the extreme right and left of the army.* The horse were drawn up in rear of the foot—in this all writers agree—and if they were in two lines, each two deep, would give a front of 2,000 horsemen, neglecting the intervals between the divisions.

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* This idea has been carried out in the Plan.

Now a writer on Mediæval warfare,* speaking of the Battle of Bouvines, observes that 800 horse would occupy about 1,040 paces, *i.e.*, 2,600 feet. Adopting his calculation, we shall find a front line of 2,000 horse would stretch along a distance of 6,500 feet, in close correspondence with the extent of Harold's line of defence.

These numbers, 10,000 foot and 10,000 horse, are quite hypothetical, but the aggregate of 20,000 is perhaps not very far from the truth ;† and if we add the camp-followers, the artificers, the priests, the garrisons of Hastings and Pevensey, the detachments all along the coast, the Norman force defeated at Romney, the seamen, and the large army still in reserve in Normandy—a portion of which joined the Duke some days after the Battle—we shall arrive at something like the figures of William of Poitou and Orderic. "*Virorum sexaginta milia*," "60,000 men," is the expression of the Poitevin, which does not necessarily infer that they were all soldiers. He elsewhere speaks of 50,000 "*milites*," which, if translated soldiers, might imply that the rest were non-combatants. The expression of Orderic, however, "*Quinquaginta milia militum cum copia peditum*," certainly seems to support Dr. Lingard's view that the "*milites*"‡ fought on

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* Macmillan, Dec. 1866.

† The foot were probably less numerous, and the horse more numerous.

‡ Lingard's Hist. Eng. i, 441.

horseback; but even if we accept this interpretation, we must not conclude that the army actually on the field consisted of 50,000 horse-soldiers, beside 10,000 foot-soldiers. Can we imagine 50,000 horses transported across the Channel? or 50,000 horse drawn up on the uneven ground facing Battle Abbey? or that forage could be found for 50,000 horses in a country full of forests and morasses? But though it is impossible to believe that 60,000 men were present at the Battle, yet it is more than probable that 60,000 men contributed directly or indirectly to the success of the enterprise; and all such are probably comprehended in these figures of the chroniclers: for 60,000 of the Conqueror's followers, in the year before he died, did homage at Clarendon for the fiefs conferred upon them.

From Telham ridge separate spurs stretch out towards Battle, but the more westerly terminate abruptly in marshy hollows, which even light troops would have crossed with difficulty. Still the Normans would find it convenient to take possession of these heights; that nearest the road being occupied, in all likelihood, by the varlets and the baggage, while the priests may have ascended the eminence still further to the west; from both of which a complete view of the Battle would be obtained.* The high road then, as now, ran along the most easterly spur, and down this

* The presumed position of the priests, as well as that of the camp-followers, is shewn in the Plan.

the heavy infantry, guarded, so we are told, by the cavalry, must have advanced in long successive columns.

The Vanguard, consisting of the splendid horsemen of the Boulonnais, and all William's Condottieri, under the Counts of Montgomery and Boulogne, would on reaching the brow of the hill wheel round in front of the Saxon lines, and take up their post on the extreme left, where the ridge terminates in a hill overlooking the Asten, and is separated by a wide and deep ravine from Powdermill Wood. The Division of the Bretons, under Alan of the Iron Glove,* consisting chiefly of infantry, proceeding by the lane which still runs parallel to the high road on the right, by the time the head of their column reached where the railway now crosses, would change direction to the right, and after a short descent of the slope, find themselves face to face with Harold's left. Meanwhile the main body of chosen horse and foot, under William himself, defiling along the high road, would debouch at the lower part of the Lake (anciently written Santlache, or Senlac, and now familiarly known as the Lake, a part of Battle stretching from the Church down to the Station Road), then deploying right and left, would exactly front the men of London, the sturdy guardians of England's Royal Banner.

The obstacles the Normans had to encounter were

* Grandson of Harold's old opponent Conan in the Tapestry. See p. 58.

of a three-fold character, and the valour of the defenders rendered them all but insurmountable.

In the first place, in front of either wing, and on the flanks of Harold's Army, were water-courses and marshy ground, and these were connected by an artificial fosse defending the centre, which, we are informed, was cut right across the *champaigne* or level ground; so that every part where an attack could be made was guarded by a ditch or moat.

Secondly, these trenches, formed by nature and art, were backed by a rampart closely compacted of wood and clay, called a shield-wall, with openings for sorties in the centre and in the wings. The position was not equally strong throughout; in some parts the ascent is very gentle, while in others it is steep.*

But, thirdly, Harold was not satisfied with this line alone. Behind these defences the ground gradually slopes upwards to the lofty ridge, partly occupied by the Buildings of the Abbey. All round this inner height was a second shield-wall; for we distinctly read that when the Normans gained their first great success, the English retired up the hill, and the Normans followed them across the valley, whereas, if the Saxons had not had a second line of defence, but had all along been cooped up on the

* Mr. Freeman has directed attention to the importance of that portion of this line that looks down on the great lake; it was a bastion formed by nature, and is noted in the Plan by a small elliptic contour immediately to the right of the western entrance.

upper heights, neither of these circumstances could have taken place, for they would have had no higher ground to go to, and the Normans, after they had stormed the Abbey heights, could not in any sense be said to have followed across the valley. There must have been then an inner enclosure almost co-incident with these upper heights, and, of course, of much smaller dimensions.*

The strength of this second position is partly concealed by the clumps of trees which cover it, more or less; but a close inspection will satisfy anyone that it was a formidable defence. Such inspection will also explain how it was that when the Saxons were driven from their lower position, they were yet able for three more hours to withstand the repeated attacks of the Normans. The front line of this defence is also well seen within the precincts of the Abbey close to the Dormitory, whose roofless walls and dilapidated windows stand so prominently out. Further on to the East, the position crossed the road just below the point where the two roads meet, and its Eastern extremity is distinctly marked by a sudden fall in the ground, about 150 yards along the road leading to Marley Farm, immediately over the Railway Station. One of the entrances, no doubt, was here, another

* It is likely that the old High Road went right over the site of the Abbey Church, almost in a line with the present High Street, but that the building of the Church on the precise spot where Harold's Standard had been necessitated a slight diversion of the road.

corresponded to the High road; and there is a very remarkable gap to the West of the Abbey, which appears to me admirably to combine two apparently contradictory requirements—facility of egress, and security from attack.

It may be noticed that I imagine the Norman Vanguard to have occupied the left; though a vanguard would usually be on the right. In this I am supported by Dr. Lingard and Mr. Lower.* My reasons for this arrangement are, firstly, that the van must have been on the flank where cavalry could act with most advantage; secondly, that it must have been on that wing in which occurred the feigned retreat of the Normans, as both Montgomery and Boulogne are described as having charged the pursuing English; and thirdly, because they would thus be opposed to the men of Kent.†

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* Sir F. Palgrave pronounced Mr. Lower's to be the only trustworthy and painstaking account of the Battle.

† Mr. Freeman takes the opposite view, and has William of Poitou on his side. Guy of Amiens, whom he also quotes, is curiously ambiguous. His words, "*Lævam Galli dextram petiere Britanni*," may be read, "The French attacked the left, the Bretons the right;" which would mean, as Mr. Freeman observes, that the French were on the right and the Bretons on the left; but the words may be rendered with equal propriety—"the French made for the left, the Bretons for the right," *i.e.*, of their own army, in taking up their positions, which would enable me to claim Guy as a witness on my side. It may be further urged in favour of my version that "right" and "left" in descriptions of battles almost always refer to the writer's own

For six hours the Normans, descending into the valley, tried unsuccessfully to force their way through the shield-wall ; and one repulse was so disastrous that had Harold possessed cavalry, he might have turned such repulse into a complete rout. This incident is described by Wace in the following terms :

> En la champaigne out un fossé ;
> Normanz l'aveient adossé ;
> En belliant l'orent passé,
> Ne l'aveient mie esgardé.

"In the plain was a Fosse which the Normans had now behind them. In deploying they had passed it and had never noticed it;" and he goes on, "But the English charged and drove the Normans before them till they made them fall back upon this Fosse, overthrowing into it horses and men. Many were to be seen falling therein, rolling one over the other with their faces to the earth, unable to rise. Many of the English also, whom the Normans drew down with them, died there. At no time during the day's Battle did so many Normans die as perished in that Fosse, so those said who saw the dead. The varlets who were set to guard the baggage, began to abandon it as they saw the loss of the Frenchmen when thrown

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army; the terms "enemy's right" and "enemy's left" being employed when it is intended to speak of the opposite force; moreover, in the following line William is spoken of as fighting in the centre of his own army, not as fighting against the centre of the enemy.

back upon the Fosse, without power to recover themselves."

This Fosse, therefore, must have been visible from the eminence in the rear on which the varlets were posted, and which, as the baggage would not be far from the main road, may fairly be identified with Quarry Hill. The Normans also passed it unnoticed. Now this they never could have done if they had crossed it; and it was so situated that Wace says the Normans had it at their back.

All these particulars seem satisfied by the deep valley or ravine, which ran all along the rear of the Norman left wing, and which, nevertheless, might not have been noticed by them, as they defiled to the left, especially if it was at all concealed by trees; yet if they were charged home, they could hardly fail to be driven to its verge. One particular point of this ravine I am inclined to identify with the Mal Fosse. In this I agree with the *Chronicon de Bello*, translated by Mr. Lower, which thus describes the place:—

"There lay between the hostile armies a certain dreadful precipice *(miserabile precipitium vaste patens)*, caused either by a natural chasm of the earth, or by some convulsion of the elements. It was of considerable extent, and being overgrown with bushes or brambles, was not very easily seen, and great numbers of men were suffocated. For ignorant of the danger, as they were running in a disorderly manner, they fell into the chasm, and were dashed to pieces and slain:

and the pit of this deplorable accident is still called Mal Fosse." The Monk of Battle's Mal Fosse, then, was situated between the hostile armies, and its position, which was well known in his day, exactly accords with the ravine which I have pointed out; having William's head quarters at Telham * on the one hand, and Battle Abbey, the head quarters of Harold, on the other. William's Chaplain terms the place "preruptum fossatum," a "precipitous ditch." In the Tapestry the incident of the Mal Fosse is faithfully depicted: with its steep hill side and marshy bottom, and man and horse rolling over.

The Normans at length lost heart; but William ordered them to shoot upwards; and he also drew the English into ambush by a preconcerted flight, by which they were so weakened that their outer line of entrenchments was forced. They fell back to the heights behind, and the Kentish wing probably wheeled round to face the West. Here the fight was renewed, and once more English valour prevailed, the Kentish men driving the Normans before them; but in so doing, they exposed their flank to William's body-guard of a thousand knights, who rode in and cut them to pieces. The fight now pressed round the Standard, and the wounded King was slain and his Banner taken. The left wing of the English, which had been comparatively free from attack throughout

* We owe to Mr. Lower the identification of Hetheland with Telham.

the day, (one proof of which, as Lower has well remarked, being that no relics of the fight have been found in the Railway cutting which traverses the extreme East of the position of both armies), was still intact, and retreated in good order across or skirting the valley upon which the Church and Deanery look; and ascending Caldbeck Hill where the windmills now stand, it might have come upon the victorious Normans, who had been pursuing the broken right and centre along High Street and Mount Street, and have inflicted on them such chastisement as to make Count Eustace doubt whether the day was yet their own, and to induce him to advise the Duke to draw off the Normans from the pursuit. As he was speaking, Count Eustace was struck on the back of the head, and carried bleeding and senseless to the rear. The pursuit abruptly terminated a little after dark. A flourish of Norman trumpets proclaimed the victory; and that Northern part of Battle has ever since been known as the Borough of Mountjoy.

Details have not been entered into further than are absolutely necessary to explain the ground, as they are so graphically given in the "Roman de Rou," the substance of which will be found in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

The Roman de Rou.

I have strung together in a very literal version such portions of the "Roman de Rou," by Robert Wace, as have most direct relation to the Battlefield. Robert Wace's grandfather was present in the famous Field, and we may imagine him in the following simple story delineating the scenes, in which he had himself taken part. I commence with the marshalling of the troops by William: but the exclamations of the English on the night before the Battle deserve our attention. In them we recognize the festive terms, "Wassail" (weissel), "Drink health" (drinckeheil), "Drink to me" (drintome), and in "Let him come" (laticome), the very natural defiance of those who were on their defence. The War-cry "Out," has a remarkable significancy when we reflect how exactly it corresponds with the position of the English, whose great effort would be to keep the Normans "out" of their entrenchments. I have, as far as possible, retained the Norman words in the translation, when they have the same, or nearly the same signification, in modern English. I have also occasionally given the quaint repetitions of the original.

William sat on his charger; he summoned Roger Count of Montgomerie before him. "Foremost," he said, "in you I trust: you shall assault them from this side, and William the Seneschal, Fitz-Osbern, a good vassal, shall ride together with you, and shall assault them with you. You shall have the men of Boulogne, and of Picardy, and all my hired soldiers. On the other side, Alan of the Iron Glove, and Aymerie the Valiant, shall lead the men of Poitou and the Bretons, and all the Barons from Maine; and I, with all my great people, with my friends and my kinsmen, will combat in the grand press where the battle is the hottest.

All the barons, and knights, and men-at-arms were in armour. The men on foot were well armed: each one carried bow and sword; they had caps* on their heads, and panels tied to their feet, and good hides to their waist. Several had put on quilted frocks, and had girt quivers and bows. The knights have hauberks and brands, boots of iron, shining helms, shields hanging from their necks, their lances in their hands; and all wore cognizances, that Normans might know each other, and that there might be no error; that one Norman might not strike another; nor one Frenchman kill another. The foot-soldiers marched in front, in serried ranks, bearing their bows. The knights rode close at hand to guard the archers. Horse and foot, just as they had commenced, held on

* The conical nasal helmets.

their way, and kept their step in serried ranks; their step was short, so that one should not outstep another, nor get behind or fall out. All marched proudly in serried ranks. On both flanks archers were stationed to aim crossways.*

Harold had sent for his men from castles and cities, from ports, villages and burghs—Earls, Barons and Vassals. The villagers were called from the villages. They bear such arms as they find; they carry maces and great shovels, iron forks and stakes. The English had fortified a field. Harold was there with his friends and the Barons of the Country, whom he had summoned.

Of their free will had come the men of London and of Kent, the men of Hertford and of Essex, of Surrey and of Sussex, of St. Edmund and of Suffolk, and of Norwich and of Norfolk, of Canterbury and of Stamford; and the men of Bedford† came, and those who are of Huntingdon; the men of Northampton, of York, and of Buckingham were come, and of Nottingham. Such men of Lindsey and of Lincoln came as knew of the summons. Already you might see a great many people coming eastward from Salisbury and from Dorset, and from Bath and Somerset; many of them came from about Gloucester, and from Worcester, from Winchester, from Hampshire, and from the County of Berkshire.

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* In the Tapestry bowmen are placed on the flanks. See p. 66.

† Who are mentioned twice.

Many came from other countries which we have not named. We could not name all, nor wish to recount all. All those who could bear arms, and knew the news of the Duke, marched to defend the land from those who wished to take it. From beyond the Humber came not many, for they had other affairs. The Danes had damaged them, and Tosti had worsted them.

Harold knew that the Normans would come, and would assault hand to hand. At dawn he had fortified a field, where he put all his English. At dawn he made them all arm and stand in line of battle; and he wore armour and apparel such as became so great a Lord.

"The Duke, who wished to conquer England," he said, "ought to seek him out; and he, who had to defend the land, ought to await him." He spoke to his people, and gave command; and to his Barons counselled that all should keep together, and defend themselves together. Whoever strayed from that point would be rescued with great difficulty. "The Normans," said he, "are good vassals, valiant on foot and on horseback; on horseback they are good horsemen, and accustomed to fight. If they are able to pierce our ranks, nothing will be able to save us. They have long lances and swords, which they have brought from their land; and you have pointed lances and great bills, well sharpened. Against your arms, which cut well, theirs avail nought. Hew down with all your might and spare nothing."

Harold had many people and stout. From all parts many had come; but a multitude is worth little if it wants heavenly virtue. But the Duke had truly more Barons and better people. Abundance he had of good knights, and great abundance of good archers. The English men-at-arms carried axes and bills which cut well.

Along their front they had made palisades* of ash and other woods, they set them up before them like hurdles joined and wattled, and left no crevice. They had made of them a barricade in front, through which the Normans must pass who wished to discomfit them. With palisades and hurdles they surrounded themselves. Here they meant to defend themselves; and if they had kept themselves well in, they had never been vanquished that day. Nor would one Norman force his way in who would not lose his life; it might be by axe, it might be by bill, or by mace, or by some other arm. They had short and small hauberks and helms over their garments.

King Harold made proclamation as their Lord, that each one should turn his face straight towards the enemy, and that no one should turn from where he was, and that whoever should come there should find them ready. Whatever Norman or another might do, each one was to defend his place well. Then he ordered those of Kent to march to the point where the Normans where going to charge. For they say

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* "Escuz," "the shield-wall."

that the men of Kent ought to strike the first; wherever the King should go to war, the first blow ought to be theirs. The Londoners, by right, ought to guard the body of the King, to take their station around him, and guard the Standard. These were placed at the Standard, which each one was to defend and guard.

When Harold had made all ready, and had commanded what he wished, he came amidst the English, and dismounted by the Standard. His two brothers, Lewine and Gurth, were with him. Many a Baron was around. Harold was next the Banner. The Banner was very valuable; of gold and glittering stones. William, after this victory, had it carried to the Pontiff, to show and keep in memory his great conquest and his great glory.

The English kept themselves in serried ranks, all eager to combat. On one side they made a fosse which went across the open. At times the Normans appeared crossing over from a height where they were; from a valley and a height issues a column, which formed the van. King Harold saw them from afar. He said to Gurth, "That they were few to conquer so great a kingdom; that he had in all the land four hundred thousand armed men." Gurth said, "All those who came from beyond the sea were much to be feared; they were well armed, well mounted, and had bows and barbed arrows."

Whilst they were speaking of those Normans, whom they were noticing, there issues another column, still

greater, hard by the first, in close order, which turned to another part of the field, and drew up as the others. Harold says to Gurth, "Our enemies increase; my heart is in great fear." Gurth replies, "It had been better if you had stayed at London, or at Winchester, as I advised you." Harold said, "I was born on a Saturday, and my mother used to say great good would come to me on that day." "Mad is he," said Gurth, "who believes in chance. You say you were born on Saturday, on this day you may be slain."

Just then there came a company who covered all the open. There was the Banner raised which was brought from Rome. Next the ensign marched the Duke. There were the best, there were the most; there were the good knights, the good vassals, and the good warriors; there were the gentle Barons, the good archers, and the good men-at-arms, who had to guard the Duke and march around him.

The boys and the other rabble, who had no business in the battle, who guarded the arms in reserve, turned towards a hill. The priests and those in orders also ascended a hill to pray and beseech God, and watch the battle.

Harold saw William coming, and the fields covered with arms, and the Normans separating in three divisions to assail in three parts. He does not know which of them most to fear. Scarcely could he for the moment speak. "We are," said he, "in evil case; much I fear that we are undone. The Count of Flanders has betrayed me. Very mad have I been

to have believed him. For by his letter he sent me word, and by sure message, that William could never have so great a force."

Gurth drew near. They placed themselves close to the Standard. Each one prays that God will guard him. Around them were their kinsmen, and the Barons whom they knew. They have prayed them all to do well. None can retreat. Each one has put on his hauberk, girded his sword, and has his shield at his neck; great axes they held on their shoulders,* with which they mean to strike great blows. They were on foot in close order. They held themselves very gallantly. But if they had been able to foresee, they might well have grieved and wept for the dolorous adventure, which would bring them much woe, and hard to bear. "Olicrosse!" they cried, and "Godemite!" shouted oft. "Olicrosse" is in English what "Sainte Croix" (Holy Cross) is in French, and "Godemite" is in French, "Dex tot poissant" (God Almighty).

The Normans had three companies to assault in three parts. In three companies they divided themselves, and three armed companies they formed. The first and second came, and then the third, which was the greatest. Here was the Duke with his own people. When they saw the Normans come, you might see the English shudder, rouse their people, and stir themselves. Some redden, others grow pale;

* As may be seen in the Tapestry.

they seize their arms, they lift their shields. The hardy exult, the cowards tremble. From far you could hear the great horns and the shock of lances, and the great blows of maces, and the great clashing of swords.

Now the English rushed on, and now turned back, and those from beyond the sea assailed, and very often retreated. The Normans cry, "Dex aie!" (God help us). The English people cry, "Ut" (Out). There you might see between sergeants and men-at-arms of the English and the Normans great contests and melées, strokes of lances and thrusts of swords. The Normans shout and taunt with words; and very often each defies the other, but knows not what the other says. The hardy are staunch, the cowards fear. The Normans say the English bark, for they understand not their speech. To the assault the Normans push on, and the English well defend themselves. They pierce hauberks and cleave shields; great blows receive, great blows repay. These go forward; these retreat. They prove each other in many a way.

In the open was a Fosse; the Normans had their backs to it. In deploying they had passed it by unnoticed. The English so harassed the Normans, so broke and routed them, that they drove them headlong into the Fosse, horses and men jammed together. You might see many men fall, turning one over the other,* stumble and bite the ground, unable to get up.

* As in the Tapestry.

Many of the English died there, whom the Normans had drawn on with them. In all the day never were so many Normans slain as perished in the Fosse; so said they who saw the dead.

The varlets, who stood by the arms and had to guard them, would have abandoned all on account of the loss of the French, whom they saw falling headlong into the Fosse unable to save themselves, when Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, said to them, "Stay! Stay! be at peace; do not move; fear nothing. For, so God please, we will conquer!" They were assured and did not move. Odo came back where the battle was fiercest. On a milk-white horse he sat. All the people knew him. A baton he held in his hand. There, where he saw most need, he made the knights turn, and there he made them stop: often he made them assault.

From the third hour of the day (9 o'clock), when the battle began, till the ninth hour (3 o'clock) was passed, the fight swayed this way and that, and none knew which would conquer. The Norman archers aimed many arrows at the English, but they covered themselves with their shields, nor could they do them any harm. They took counsel to aim high; when the arrows were coming down again, they fell upon their heads, and put out the eyes of several. The arrows flew more thickly than rain before the wind. Then it happened that an arrow, which was falling from on high, struck Harold above the right eye, and destroyed one of his eyes; and Harold by force drew the arrow out,

threw it away with his hands and broke it; and because his head was in great pain he rested on his shield. The Normans saw that the English defended themselves well, and were so strong that they could avail little against them. They consulted privately, and arranged among themselves to draw off from the English, and to make a semblance of flight, so that the English should pursue them and scatter through the fields. If they could separate them they could better assail them, and their strength would be much less, and so they would easier discomfit them; and as they said, so they did, and the English pursued them. Little by little the Normans give way in flight, and the English follow; the more the Normans drew off, the more nearly the English approached. Through the withdrawal of the French the English thought and said that the men of France were flying, that they never would return. The feigned flight deceived them. Through the flight great harm accrued to them, for if they had not moved, right well they might have defended themselves, and hardly had been vanquished. But like madmen they scattered, like madmen they pursued. You might see with great subtlety the men of Normandy retreat; retreating they marched slowly, to make the English come on. The Normans fly and English chase; they couch their lances, they raise their axes; when they were cheering and scattered over the open, you might have heard the Barons sound the recall, and cry "Halt! God help us!" The Normans retraced their march, and

turned their faces to the foe. Then you might see the Normans turn and intermingle with the English.

Amongst the Norman warriors are mentioned Roger of Belmont, William Mallet, the Lord of Montfort, William of Vezpont, the Chamberlain of Tankerville, the Lords of Albermarle, of Esterville, and Eustace of Abbeville, old Geoffrey of Maine, and old Humphrey of Bohun, William of Warenne, old Hugh of Gournay, and Engerrand of the Eagle, the Viscount of Tours, and the Butler of Aubignie and of Lacie, Tracy and Rivers and Mohun, Roger Marmion and the Avenels, Bruce, St. John, Lucy and Montfichet, Hugh Bigod, Hay, Mowbray and Say, Mortimer and Sinclair, Robert of Mortaigne, Harcourt, the Count of Eu,* and the Lord of St. Valerie. But the Normans had all given up the assault when Roger of Montgomerie came charging with lowered lance. There you might hear noises and cries and the splintering of lances. The English were at bay at their barriers, they shore off the lance heads; with bills and hatchets they hewed to pieces them (the Normans) and their lances: and the latter drew their swords, and broke down all the barriers, and the English in great dejection retreated to the Standard. There were assembled all the mutilated and the hurt. There were many knights of Chauz † who were

* First Governor of Hastings Castle, and Founder of St. Mary's College.

† Normandy, East of the Seine.

accustomed to joust. The English did not joust, nor wear armour on horseback. Axes and bills they held; with such arms they combated. The man who wishes to strike with the axe has to hold it with his two hands; he cannot think of covering himself if he wishes to strike with great force. To strike home and cover at the same time cannot be done, so it seems to me. Upon a height they (the English) took their stand, the Normans placed themselves in the vale.

The Normans on foot and on horseback assaulted them like vassals. Then Hugh of Mortimer charged, and Sinclair overthrew many English. Robert Fitz-Ernèst couched his lance, took his shield, reached the Standard, fighting with his sword, which was sharp-edged; he struck an Englishman who was in front, beat him down dead with a single blow; then he drew the weapon back. Many a blow he struck the English. He went straight to the Standard, for he wished to beat it down, but the English surrounded it, and with their bills slew him. There he was found, when search was made, by the Standard slain. Count Robert of Mortaigne was never far from the Duke. He was brother to the Duke by his mother. He gave his brother great aid. I do not know how to name all the Barons, nor to tell the surnames of all from Normandy and Bretagne whom the Duke had in his company. Many were from Maine and Anjou, from Tours and Poitou, and from Picardy and Boulogne. Great was the people, great the need. From many a land came hired soldiers, some for land and some for money.

The Duke William himself combats ; in the greatest press he fights ; and he, too, who holds his Banner, his name was Tostein, son of Rou the Fair. He was born at Bec, close to Fécamp, a knight of prowess and renown, and when the Duke turned, he turned, and when he halted, he halted. The Duke had a very great company of vassals of Normandy, who to protect their Lord exposed their bodies to the blow. Alan of the Iron Glove, Count of Bretagne, leads a great company of Bretons. Well fought Alan of the Iron Glove ; a knight he was, proved and valiant. He marches, leading the Bretons with him; he does great damage to the English. The Lord of St. Valerie and the Count of Eu struck good blows there, and Roger of Montgomerie and Viscount Aymerie of Tours. The Duke William splinters his lance against the English; he strives to get to the Standard with the great people whom he leads, and takes upon himself to seek out Harold, since through him is all the war. The Normans march surrounding their Lord and aiming great blows at the English. These are forward to defend themselves and receive their enemies with blows. There, where the press was the thickest, they of Kent and they of Essex fought wondrously well, and routed the Normans and made them retreat below, but could not do them great harm. The Duke saw his people rushing out again,* and the English

* *i.e.*, Driven from the entrenched high ground into which they had found their way.

cheering loudly; from his squires he took his shield; he took a lance which a valet kept for him and laid it in rest, and took post close by his Banner.* More than a thousand armed men around, who formed his grand guard, and fought wherever he fought, in close order as they ought, moved toward the English. With the shock of the good chargers and with the blows of the knights, they broke the dense mass and pierced the crowd before them. The good Duke leads the van; many chased and many fled, and you might see many English fall and lie, trampled on by horses, unable to get up. Many of the richest and the highest fell in this rout. The English in some places rally; they slay those they reach, and strive beyond their power; they beat down the men, they kill the horses. The Normans pushed on so far in front that they reached the Standard.

Harold was at the Standard. He defended himself with all his power, but suffered much on account of the eye that had been destroyed. Whilst he suffered pain from the wound over the eye, there came an armed man in the battle who struck Harold on the aventayle† and brought him to the ground, and when he tried to raise himself, a knight beat him down again, gashing his thigh right through the bone.‡

* This may be the occasion in the Tapestry where the Duke raises his helmet. See p. 67.

† The front part of the helmet.

‡ This incident is minutely delineated in the Tapestry. The felon knight who dealt the blow was afterwards disgraced by the Conqueror. See page 68.

Gurth saw the English in disorder, saw that there was no means of rallying, saw his lineage fall; of saving himself had no hope. He wished to fly, but could not, for the press was always increasing. Just then the Duke fights his way and reaches him, and with great force pierced his breast. They laid the Standard low, and slew King Harold and the best of his friends. They took the golden Banner. Such eagerness was there to kill Harold that I know not who slew him.

The English felt great sorrow for that they had lost King Harold, and that the Duke had vanquished, and that the Standard was beaten down: still for long they fought, for long defended themselves, so that at the last the day turned to its decline; and then they saw too well that the Standard was fallen, and the news came and spread that Harold in very sooth was dead. They look for no further succour; from the battle they depart. Those fly who can. Harold was found among the dead.

William fought well: engaged in many a melée, many a blow he gave, many received, and by his hand many died. Two horses were slain under him.*

The Duke William, in his pride, where the Standard had stood, ordered his Banner to be brought, and there he had it raised on high. This was the sign

* The incident of the Duke making himself known may have arisen from a panic, caused by his fall, when one of these horses was killed; for the onlookers would fancy the Duke himself was slain.

that he had vanquished. His Barons, Knights, and Squires, all said, "Never did Baron ride or fight so well, or do such feats of arms." Since Rowland and since Oliver such a Knight had not been in the land.

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NOTE.—The following Livings were annexed to the College of St. Mary:—Beckley, Bexhill, Bodiam, Brightling, Bulverhythe, Crowhurst, Dallington, Etchingham, Ewhurst, Guestling, Hailsham, Ham Street, Hoo, Iden, Mountfield, Ninfield, Peasemarsh, Rye, Salehurst, Sedlescombe, Ticehurst, Stone, Udimore, Wartling, and the Christ's Share of the Winchelsea Fishery.